An exploration of creativity in the lives of English teachers: representing voices through found poetry

Thesis submitted in accordance with requirements of the University of Chester for the degree of Doctor of Education

by Martin Matthews

October 2020

Declaration

I declare that the material being presented for examination in this thesis is my own work and has not been submitted for an award of this or another Higher Education Institution.

Signed: Martin Matthews **Date:** 18.10.20

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my appreciation to the EdD tutors at the University of Chester for their support and guidance. In particular, I would like to thank Dr Sally Bamber and Dr Luke Jones for their supervision and encouragement during the completion of this thesis; their support has been invaluable. Finally, I would like to thank the participants in this study for allowing me to tell their stories.

Dedication

For my family

"It [poetry] becomes another truth to which we can have recourse, before which we can know ourselves in a more fully empowered way"

Seamus Heaney

"How can the bird that is born for joy
Sit in a cage and sing?"

William Blake

An exploration of creativity in the lives of English teachers: representing voices through found poetry

Martin Matthews

Abstract

This arts-based research sets out to explore the place of creativity in the lives of a group of English teachers in one secondary school in the north west of England. More specifically, it uses found poetry to examine creativity in the lives of English teachers who work within the context of an increasingly performative educational system. As well as interrogating the place of creativity in the lives of the participants, the study also explores how found poetry can be used as a research method to represent and analyse data and communicate research findings in a manner that is democratic and illuminating. The words that created the poems came from two semi-structured interviews with each participant. After the first interview, the participants were able to scrutinise and reflect upon the content of the found poems before returning for a second interview. This recursive process helped build confidence in the findings and gave a deeper understanding of the experiences of the participants in relation to creativity whilst eliciting further responses in the interview process itself. The findings suggest that English teachers have limited space to be creative, or to think differently in their teaching practice. The limited space to be creative comes from the normalising practices of a performance culture, but the restrictions are both real and self-imposed by the participants. There is perhaps a need to find a new space for English teachers to act, or think creatively and form notions of resistance in order to re-think English teacher identity.

Summary of portfolio

This thesis has developed from work completed during a Doctorate in Education. What follows is a summary of the assignments I undertook before starting the thesis.

Research Methodologies for Professional Enquiry

The ideas explored in this assignment supported me in considering my position as a developing researcher alongside my practice as a teacher in secondary education. The enquiry in this assignment set out my philosophies of how I interpret and make meaning of data within a small-scale research project that stemmed from experiences in my professional role at the time as head of drama. The project consisted of a series of interviews with a teacher of English, where I examined the perspective of teaching drama from an English teacher's standpoint. This study allowed me the time to consider new perspectives and interpretations of teaching spaces, the curricula that take place in them and the teachers that utilise those spaces.

Social Theory and Education: Key Issues and Debates

This module challenged me to select readings of a theorist or theory and demonstrate application of his ideas to an area of my professional practice. I reflected on how an increasingly data driven, performative culture demands teachers in schools have greater accountability for student attainment. Using Foucault's ideas of surveillance, I explored notions of punishment and control through an in-depth analysis of an online performance management system in an English secondary school. I considered how the system places pressures on teachers to perform, controlling and limiting many aspects of their teaching practice.

Creativity in Practice

This assignment comprised a practical task and written accompaniment. I elected to create an audio-visual piece in the form of a 'mockumentary' with the aim of satirising restrictions to creativity and freedom within secondary education in England. The story in the mockumentary was based on real scenarios from experiences I had organising extracurricular activities at lunchtimes and after school such as directing school plays, running drama workshops and leading a creative writing group. I had been asked by my line manager at the time to provide attendance figures, alongside evidence of how students' participation had supported progress against their target grades back in their lessons. Regarding the creative writing group specifically, I tried (and failed) to explain that the aim of the writing group was that students would not have their work marked and 'judgements' would come though peer feedback based on mutual respect. The mockumentary captured the conflict between attempting to give students the room to encourage writing that was new and different in a school system that increasingly attempts to monitor free space. This was inspired by notions of critical thinking and freedom which stemmed from ideas put forward by Freire.

Cultural Practices

In this assignment I explored the impact of power structures realised through accountability measures on teachers in an English secondary school. Using Ball's ideas centred in the pressures of a performance culture, I interrogated the impact of performance processes on the teaching of English literature. I interviewed two teachers from an English secondary school regarding their experiences of teaching English literature and explored how measures designed to hold them to account might affect student engagement with the subject. This exploration followed recent changes to the English literature specification that saw a return to end of year written examinations with no teacher assessed component.

Institutions, Discontinuities and Systems of Knowledge

Within this assignment I analysed a small, focussed discontinuity that I considered to be worthy of exploration. Through ideas put forward by Lacan and Foucault, I examined the relationships between teachers and pupils on the edges of the school where rules may be tested. The edges of the school were the literal spaces on the corners of the school field or away from the classroom, but also the edges of the representation of identity. I examined what happens to identities of both teachers away from the normalised practices of the classroom and what takes place when norms considered absolute are questioned.

Table of contents

Acknowledgements ...……...3
Abstract ……5
Summary of portfolio ……..6
Contents ……9
Chapter 1: Introduction ……..12
1:1 Research aims and my place within the study ...…….……...14
1:2 All change ……20
1:3 The teacher's soul ...……...22
1:4 Setting aside the immeasurable ……...……..23
1:5 Chapters to come ……...27
Chapter 2: Literature review ……..29
2:1 Creativity ……...29
2:2 Setting the scene: the culture of teaching in England ……...35
2:3 Performativity ……...40
2:4 Neoliberalism in English education ……..43
2:5 Surveillance: the panopticon and beyond ……..46
2:6 Summary ……...52
Chapter 3: Methodology ……...……53
3:1 Aims and overview of the research ……...54
3:2 Theoretical overview ……55
3:3 Creative approaches …….……57
3:4 Interviews ……..59
3:5 Reflexivity ……62
3:6 Poetry in research ……..65
3:6 (i) Creating the poetry and method of analysis ……...……...……...66
3:6 (ii) The validity of poetry in research ……73
3:7 Ethics ……75
3:8 Summary ……...77
Chapter 4: Presentation and analysis of voices through poetry …...……..…79
4:1 Laura's story ……80
4:1 (i) Laura and creativity in English ……80
4:1 (ii) Laura and the past ……...83
4:1 (iii) Laura and performativity ……...90

4:1 (iv) Laura and assessment ……93
4:1 (v) Laura and her creative self ……..96
4:2 Rachel's story ...……...107
4:2 (i) Rachel and creativity in English ……..……..107
4:2 (ii) Rachel and assessment ……...……...110
4:2 (iii) Rachel and creativity: no place for little acts of creativity ...……114
4:2 (iv) Rachel and time ...……120
4:2 (v) Rachel and data and assessment ...……..…123
4:2 (vi) Rachel and messing about …...……126
4:2 (vii) Rachel and her creative self ……127
4:3 Daniel's story ..……132
4:3 (i) Daniel and creativity in English: no room to fail ……..……..…132
4:3 (ii) Daniel and generic pop music: restrictions to creativity …..……135
4:3 (iii) Daniel and assessment: the gatekeepers of creativity ……...……...137
4:3 (iv) Daniel and his creative self ……..……145
4:4 Dawn's story …….……..…147
4:4 (i) Dawn and creativity in English: ideas and feelings ……..……..147
4:4 (ii) Dawn and measuring success: students in boxes …….……152
4:4 (iii) Dawn and her creative self …….……..155
4:4 (iv) Dawn and the assessment system …….……157
4:4 (v) Dawn and tangents: limited room to be different …….……159
4:4 (vi) Dawn and belonging: that is no system for creative teachers ……..….……...161
4:5 Summary ……162
Chapter 5: Deeper findings and synthesis of ideas ……..163
5:1 Restrictions to creativity through assessment: real or self-imposed …… ……..165
5:2 Limited room to think differently: from time constraints to being serious …….171
5:3 Unhappy robots ……...179
5:4 Summary ……..…182
Chapter 6: Conclusions ……...185
6:1 Key conclusions ……..186
6:2 Found poetry: an illuminating method……188
6:3 Looking ahead: what next? ……..……...192
6:4 Challenges to this study and the potential for research in the future ...……...197

6:5 Contribution to knowledge ……..198
6:6 Closing points ……..……199
References ……201
Appendices ……...218
Appendix A Participant information sheet ……..…..218
Appendix B Research Consent Form .…….……...…220
Appendix C Additional poems: Laura …….…….221
Appendix D Additional poems: Rachel ……...…….226
Appendix E Additional poems: Daniel ……..……...…229
Appendix F Additional poems: Dawn ……..233

Chapter 1: Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to explore a group of four English teachers' perceptions of creativity in their lives. The arts based methodology of found poetry will be utilised to support the collection and representation of participants' voices stemming from a series of one-on-one interviews that take place in an English secondary school. This chapter will outline the basis for this research and its key aims, whilst considering contextual factors that underpin English secondary education. I will also discuss the importance of this study and provide an outline of the use of arts based methodologies in research, whilst reflecting on my own position in relation to the work. The chapter will conclude with an overview of what will come in the remaining chapters.

Secondary education in England has been adjusting to high levels of change in recent years as the government has overhauled most aspects of the curriculum simultaneously (Torrance, 2018). The Global Education Reform Movement (GERM) describes the global change and approach to education and notes that constant reform is like a virus infecting many education systems (Sahlberg, 2012). Fuller and Stevenson (2019) argue that the GERM acronym is powerful as it acts as a signifier for how the 'virus' permeates policies and practices in education. English schools become increasingly market driven and guided by a business model approach, leading to an increased focus on performance measures and high stakes accountability for teachers. GERM causes more competition within education and a drives a notion that educational quality improves when schools compete (Apple, 2005, 2006; Ball, 2003, 2013b, 2015; Fuller & Stevenson 2019; Sahlberg, 2012). Competition supports increased accountability for teaching staff, which leads them to compete with each other in a progressively performance driven culture. A performative culture has the power to not just change teachers as professionals, but alter who they are as people (Ball, 2003). Performance

is underpinned by measurable outcomes that stem from notions of improvement and development of quality, although the procedures utilised can often become counterproductive (Gewirtz, Maguire, Neumann & Towers, 2019). I am interested in how measurable outcomes and a culture of performativity may affect the creativity of English teachers and their engagement in more democratic approaches to education. Specifically, I aim to tell the story of a focussed group of English teachers from a secondary school in the north west of England in regard to their experiences of creativity.

Creativity is a multifaceted notion, but for this study I will be reflecting on the freedom that teachers may have to enquire, innovate and generally have agency in their roles as teachers. I will also explore whether English teachers engage with creative practices away from work and consider links to their professional practice. I will further discuss what creativity is in relation to this study in more detail in my literature review and then in subsequent chapters.

I have chosen to explore creativity in the lives of English teachers now, as I see what I consider to be Ball's (2003) discussion of performativity and its effects mirrored in my personal experiences as both a secondary school teacher and a writer. I believe that performative practices have limited my own creative approach to English teaching which has provoked me to explore how other English teachers engage with creative practices. This research is significant now because I believe it is important to pose questions about the creative role of all teachers, but more specifically those of the subject of English in these times of change and increased accountability. This is because debates about English's place in the curriculum continue and questions arise regarding the importance of creative thinking and practices in contemporary secondary education on the whole (Marshall, 2010). Creativity is a good thing for human beings, as it supports the improvement of people's

context and quality of life (Beetlestone, 1998). With this in mind, I want to explore what Jeffrey and Craft (2010) refer to as the universal reach of creativity in the lives of ordinary people in education. I could have focussed on other ideas such as subject knowledge or empathy in English teachers in a performance driven culture, but I consider that creativity (although a difficult concept to pin down) is a feature that makes people human, allows for self-actualisation and is vital to life (Goleman, Kaufman & Ray, 1993). Each individual is capable of being creative if they are provided with an apt setting (Jeffrey & Craft, 2010). I want to know more about how a secondary school setting in England might impact on English teachers' potential to engage with creative acts. Robinson (2009) suggests that humans are born with natural creative capacities that they lose as they age and spend more time in the world, with a key reason for this loss being state education (Joubert, 2010). I will interrogate the current culture in education in England in this chapter and in Chapter 2 to better frame the context that the English teachers in this study are working within.

1:1 Research aims and my place within the study

Through a series of one-on-one semi-structured interviews**,** I will gather the views of four English teachers' perceptions of creativity in their lives. The voices of the participants gathered in the interview process will be turned into found poetry. Found poetry is an arts-based method of research that is utilised to analyse, reflect on and represent data from research in a manner that is engaging and different (Owens & Pässilä, 2020). I will engage with found poetry to analyse the voices of the participants, present their voices and elicit responses from them in a supportive, democratic approach. I will discuss my methodology in more detail in Chapter 3.

To achieve the aims of the research I will strive to answer the following key research questions:

- Do the English teachers featured in this study see themselves as being creative?
- Do the English teachers featured in this study value creativity (both ordinary and extra ordinary)?
- Does a performative culture affect how the English teachers in the study believe they can have agency to teach and support creativity in their lessons?

Finally,

- Can found poetry provide a way to present the voices of English teachers that is novel and illuminating?

This research will contribute to existing knowledge concerning arts based methodologies as a way to present participants' voices and support a new and deeper understanding of them. Equally, I believe this work will contribute new knowledge and understanding to the place of creativity in the lives of secondary school English teachers. This may have implications for the way English is seen as a subject and also pose questions as to the identity of English teachers. This study could also be valuable for English teachers who are looking for a deeper understanding of their creative experiences as they may see their own practices mirrored in the stories of the participants presented through the poetry in this study. This study is important to me as a teacher, writer and developing researcher as it allows me to reflect on my own teaching practice and explore new ways of researching and presenting data.

My position in relation to this study

I am currently employed as a secondary school English teacher in an 11-18 comprehensive school in England. I have worked as a teacher in English schools for sixteen years and I am a

middle leader (Deputy Department Leader of English). I have taught a number of subjects during my time teaching. I was head of drama in two English secondary schools and head of media studies in one. I have also worked on extended leadership teams in two English schools where I lead whole school projects. I have completed professional qualifications: Leading from the Middle and National Professional Qualification for Senior Leadership (NPQSL) (Department of Education, 2019). My experiences have shaped how I understand teaching in England and have formed part of the inspiration for this study. I intend to find out more about how other teachers that teach the subject of English see the space in which they work and live in terms of their creative practice.

As well as teaching, I write poetry, plays and non-fiction pieces for a teaching publication. I have rarely told people about my writing and I seldom share my work with other people. My reluctance to discuss my own creativity is part of my drive to find out if other teachers of English are similar in terms of creative endeavours. I believe my writing is creative as I complete it without expectation of assessment or judgement and undertake it with a sense of agency. In my experience there is not an overtly active participation in creative acts from teachers in English lessons in the school I work in. In drama lessons, teachers will often perform using ideas like teacher in role (O'Neill, 1995), or art teachers might draw or paint (Zwirn, 2006). Creativity in English lessons does not seem to be demonstrated as often, or at all (Gilbert, 2012). This is intriguing as English sits in a strange place between subjects classified as 'the arts' and being a 'core' subject. I will reflect on this in more detail later.

After undertaking an undergraduate degree in drama & theatre studies and English, I completed a PGCE in English with drama. My first teaching post was a teacher of English and drama. Mercieca (2013) argues that identities are formed through numerous notions that

people develop or assume they have. I noticed a pressure to shift identities when teaching in the English and drama teaching spaces. In the drama space it seemed that I had more room to be creative and support students' creativity, whereas in the English classroom that freedom did not seem to be there in the same way. I felt the need to embrace multiple identities and change my approach to pedagogy in the different curriculum areas I worked in in order to fit expected norms (Nicholson, 2005). Over time I believe I internalised these changes to my identity, so I was no longer 'acting' the roles of an English or a drama teacher, I became them at different times of a working week and across my career. Presently, the majority of my teaching time is centred in teaching the English curriculum. I am interested to know how much a performative culture has impacted on the identity of other English teachers, specifically in relation to their creative practice.

I started writing when I was a child and would create stories like many children do (Joubert, 2010). When I was fourteen a friend's band needed a bass player; I was told "it's only got four strings Martin, it must be easy to play". My friends and I started to write our own songs, which were not of a high standard or extra ordinary pieces of creativity (Craft, 2010), but they were creative acts that allowed us to develop as musicians, writers and young adults. The only people judging us where ourselves (or possibly our parents who were subject to band practices and subsequent tape-cassette recordings). Whereas most of my friends stopped writing songs before they left school, I carried on writing. This writing usually took the form of poetry that would be left in a folder and not shared with anyone or redrafted, with the exception of a few pieces that were put to music and turned into songs that I played alone. This was just something I did at home, on a train or in work meetings when no one was looking. I carry on writing poetry and other literary forms in this manner to this day. I do not usually discuss writing with my family, colleagues or my English classes, nor do I tend to

model creative writing in my English lessons or make it part of the teaching process. It was during 2018 that I selected a few poems for publication and sent them to poetry journals for consideration. I am not sure what drove me to do this; it was possibly undertaking this doctorate and discussing notions of creativity, whilst perhaps searching for validation of my writing. At the time of writing this thesis, one of my poems has been published in a national poetry journal (Matthews, 2018). My reason for outlining this brief history is to orientate my personal experiences within this work and to highlight that I am a poet. My experiences to date have driven me to reflect more deeply on notions of creativity and have motivated me to want to know if other English teachers write, or engage in creative practices both in their classrooms and in their personal lives. Creativity does not seem to be a topic that is open for discussion in the working lives of English teachers, nor does it seem central to the work of being an English teacher. I want to find out if this is actually the case. My reflections have also driven me to consider whether I could use poetry as a means to explore the voices of the participants in this study. I will discuss this in more detail later.

I will be focussing on England rather than the United Kingdom (UK) as a whole in this study, because Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland's education systems are under the control of devolved governments and are increasingly diverging from England and each other (Hulme, 2018; Sibieta, 2019). I have selected England for this study, as my professional practice as a secondary school teacher is located there and I have both access to the school I work in and knowledge of the systems within the school and England as a whole. Even though my study is situated in England, any findings may have implications for practitioners working in other countries as educational reform is a global phenomenon (Sahlberg, 2012).

There exists the notion of artist teachers who both teach art and are artists themselves (Daichendt, 2009; Zwirn, 2006) and ideas regarding the development of creative, collaborative practices through drama are well established (Adams & Owens, 2016; Boal, 2008a, 2008b; Neelands, 1984; O'Neill, 1995; Owens & Barber, 1997). I want to know more about how the English teachers that feature in this study understand creativity in their lives and whether they see themselves as creative practitioners. I believe that this is an area of exploration that is interesting and may contain stories that have not been extensively explored in previous studies. It is my intention to explore the voices of the focussed group of English teachers through semi-structured interviews and tell their stories through found poetry. I will outline my approach in more detail towards the end of this chapter and then again in greater detail in Chapter 3.

Drama has had a history of being a means to explore ideas and issues in creative, democratic ways (Boal, 2008a, 2008b; Neelands, 1984; Nicholson, 2005; O'Neill, 1995; Owens & Barber, 1997). This can sometimes be designated as applied drama, which Nicholson (2005) described as being concerned with how narratives might be deconstructed and confronted. Within applied drama there will often be an oppositional quality where drama practitioners have a specific commitment to ensure prevailing social narratives are disrupted. Boal (2008a) describes drama as a weapon that can be used for liberation as it can support emancipatory practices through the chance to pose questions about which stories are told and which have been recognised as the truth. Drama can help to redress a balance by offering new narratives. Regarding English teaching, it seems that the main narrative in contemporary times is to ensure that students pass examinations (Torrance, 2018) with little time, or desire to engage in creative writing or creative practices such as drama. As a practitioner that has taught both English and drama I am fascinated by the differences in their teaching spaces and

want to know more about whether English teachers believe they have space to be creative, have agency in their roles and whether they ever question the narrative of being an English teacher.

Leavy (2015) suggests that in research there is a serious reflection on the relationship between the arts and science. I want to find out whether poetry in research can capture human experiences and perceptions of the world in a novel and illuminating manner. The use of poetry in this thesis will be a creative, ethnographic approach that will allow me to explore a focused group of English teachers' reflections on creative practice and tell their stories; this novel presentation may also lead to new understandings. The poetry itself will not need to contend with literary greats, but rather stand alone as a method of expressing participants' voices and stories in an enlightening fashion. The poet Seamus Heaney argued:

> It [poetry] becomes another truth to which we can have recourse, before which we can know ourselves in a more fully empowered way. In fact, to read poetry… is to experience something bracing and memorable, something capable of increasing in value. (Heaney, 1996, p.8)

I will outline my methodological approach, including how I will use poetry to empower understanding in more detail in Chapter 3.

1:2 All change

Ball (2003, 2013b) argues that education has been under constant reform and change throughout modern times, but its pace has increased in recent decades. These reforms have led to an increased performative culture in education (Apple, 2005, 2006; Ball, 2003, 2013b) and this study will explore the potential effects performative measures may have on English teachers in a school in England, in terms of their experience of creativity in their lives. Ball (2003) emphasises "[t]he novelty of this epidemic of reform is that it does not simply change what people, as educators, scholars and researchers do, it changes who they are" (p.215).

This statement has inspired me to question how much school reforms may have changed English teachers and explore the impact it may have had on their ability to be creative. Through the use of technologies and data, teachers of all subjects are under increased levels of scrutiny and surveillance (Ball, 2003, 2015; Page, 2017). Surveillance and accountability measures develop a structure that maintains a continuous gaze on each aspect of school life, including teachers' performance. This allows schools to be governed from a distance, whilst also providing means for teachers to judge themselves. A continuous regime of comparison against their colleagues and themselves, asks teachers to be more productive and exceptional. Collaboration and autonomy is replaced with restricted ideas of what constitutes success and generates the means for teachers to measure and judge themselves (Ball 2003, 2013a, 2013b; Holloway & Brass, 2018). I have experienced this for myself, but I am interested in how other teachers of English work within a performative culture and how creativity, agency and a sense of self actualisation might function there.

Jardine (2005) argues that teachers' "hearts, minds, spirits and bodies… cry out that modern educational practices produce harmful and alienating effects" (p.2). According to Jardine (2005), this results in schools not supporting personal development or growth, as teachers' professional autonomy is diminished. This leaves teachers in a position where they are controlled by the beliefs of modern western culture and function in a restricted, competitive environment. Changes to education stem from long held conservative beliefs that British culture is in decline, coupled with a conviction that recent educational reforms can offer a sense of unity, stability and certainty (Neumann, Gewirtz, Maguire & Towers, 2020). With expectations of raising standards comes the pressure to perform and prove that standards are climbing with certainty and stability. I am interested to find out more about how contemporary educational practices may affect the English teachers' experience of teaching

and their chance to engage with practices that allow them to have agency and space to develop their creative practice.

1:3 The teacher's soul

Ball (2003) discusses what he describes as the teacher's soul and the terrors faced under the performative measures of teaching that do not just change how teachers function in the classroom, but modifies who they are as people. Soul has notions of a deep part of what makes humans who are they are and links to spirituality, or a deep sense of self (McNiff, 2004). Ball (2003, 2013a, 2013b, 2015) argues that a performative culture, driven by various levels of authority from school leaders to The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted), terrorises teachers' souls and ensures that teaching is conducted in a manner that is perceived to be acceptable and measurable by those in power. In a performative culture a teacher becomes a "managed professional" (Codd, 2005, p.200) who is expected to have quantified capabilities, to be extrinsically driven by a prescribed association with teaching and to produce what can be measured. In order to achieve the correct performance indicators that can later be measured, teachers need to teach the school curriculum within an inflexible arrangement that focusses on constant improvement (Gewirtz, et al., 2019; White, 2010). Disciplines in school that are most pliable to being measured are favoured and those that are difficult to measure are set aside (Eisner, 1985). Performativity drives a fear in teachers as they are increasingly asked to assess their performance as a teacher against various means of measurement.

> Performativity is a culture or a system of 'terror'. It is a regime of accountability that employs judgements, comparisons and displays as means of control, attrition and change. The performances of individual subjects or organisations serve as measures of productivity or output, or displays of 'quality', or 'moments' of promotion and inspection. These performances stand for, encapsulate or represent the worth, quality or value of an individual or organisation within a field of judgement. (Ball, 2013b, p.57)

It is Ball's (2003, 2013b) articulation of performativity and how I see that mirrored in my personal experiences that first provoked me to explore how English teachers might function within a field of judgement driven by a performative culture and whether this impacts on their ability to be creative and have agency and space to develop as an autonomous professional.

1:4 Setting aside the immeasurable

At the school I work in, one of the six lessons a fortnight that year 7 and 8 students study English is spent in the school library for an independent study session. Up until recently, the aim of these sessions was for students to develop a portfolio of work that consisted of their own responses to a selected area of interest linked to their English study. The library setting was designed to be freer than the conventional English classroom environment. Students' work could include ideas such as reviews of books they have read or the creation of new poems and artwork inspired by the genres they have enjoyed in English. At the end of the school year the work was displayed in a manner students felt happy with, such as models of scenes from novels and performance work inspired by notions linked to English lessons. Students were supported in this process by being provided with a range of ideas on a menu of tasks, but they also had free reign to complete concepts of their own with flexibility on time limits.

Room 13 is a network of student-run art studios in schools and other settings, stemming from a group of students that set up their own art studio in 1994. On their website, Room 13 (2020) highlight that they give "creative freedom… [and]…facilitate the work of young artists alongside a professional adult Artist in residence… students are encouraged to take the lead, be creative and think for themselves". In a similar fashion to Room 13, English lessons

in the library were designed to allow students to be increasingly independent and discover and cultivate creative ideas whilst being supported by their English teacher. Adams and Owens (2016) discuss how Room 13 provides support for practices that are both democratic and creative. The library sessions in the school I work in, were designed to offer a freer space than the conventional English classroom where the focus is progress against set targets stemming from prior attainment data. The sessions were facilitated by an English teacher whose role was to aid a more creative environment that supported the students finding their own voice in a more democratic setting.

Perryman, Maguire, Braun and Ball, (2018) argue that teachers are subjected to a seemingly unremitting gaze and perform accordingly in order to demonstrate that they are proficient. These notions imply that Ofsted inspectors, or the idea of what Ofsted represent, are greater and have more power than the professional teacher in the classroom. Ofsted inspectors arrived at the school in which I work in May 2018. When visiting English lessons, the Ofsted inspector did not talk to any of the English teachers. When she entered an independent study lesson in the library, she ignored the teacher and wandered around the room watching a few students in particular. Ignoring the teacher might undermine them or question their role as the professional in the space with the students (Codd, 2005). It also could signify the greater authority that Ofsted hold in the teaching space which reminds both the teacher and the student that the power in the classroom does not ultimately rest with the teacher, nor with the students, but with a force away from the teaching space. Whether the Ofsted inspector is there or not is perhaps irrelevant as there is arguably an Ofsted inspector present in the minds of teachers at all times which encourages self-surveillance (Ball, 2013a; Foucault, 1991; Perryman, et al., 2018). The Ofsted inspector was a visitor, but did not conform to usual

social conventions of being a visitor and this suggests that Ofsted have ownership over the space the teacher is working within.

Foucault (1973, 1991) and Perryman, et al. (2018) argue that individuals are moulded into accepting regimes of truth, rather than being controlled through direct coercion. This is usually achieved through hierarchical supervision, normalising through sanctions and examination of processes which include the monitoring of lessons and gathering of data and information that allow for judgement of teacher effectiveness (Ball, 2015). Lessons are monitored by various levels of power from the headteacher through to middle leaders and then to the teachers themselves. It is both teachers and students that are educated into regimes of normalised behaviour and it is Ofsted inspections that support the supervision and legitimisation of processes that enforce systems of measurement and normalisation (Perryman, et al., 2018). Through comparison with a selected norm it is possible to impose uniformity allowing those in power to measure difference, select levels and condense variances to fit each other (Foucault, 1991). The independent study session in the school library demonstrated a diversion from the normative processes of English teaching in English secondary schools. The Ofsted inspector noted that students seemed to be wandering around doing whatever they wanted (using the computers for research, reading books on the sofas, completing written tasks of their choice and painting) with no obvious time limits. This was a problem, as the inspector considered that progress was not being made. This was mainly due to there not being a mark scheme for the creative work and the teacher not clearly highlighting the goals of the lesson. The creative process was not being measured against an end of year target grade for English; this was a deviation from the norm.

The truth is I perhaps cannot say that the independent study lessons were creative for certain. What I can say is that the freedoms granted in that space, gave students and the teacher a sense of agency and ability to work on creative acts linked to the subject of English. This learning environment was fostered by the English teacher overseeing the session who would often lead by example or engage in creative work with the students. Marshall (2010) tells the story of children's writer David Almond, who, after visiting a primary school, felt that there was not enough room for children to be creative. Almond argued that teachers should have the freedom to promote and encourage young people to write for themselves. Incidents such as the Ofsted visit to my school and the normalising processes that arise from a belief in what inspectors want to see, might affect how English teachers approach the teaching of their lessons as a whole and their agency to be creative in doing so. This reflection is a driving force in the work that follows in this thesis as I want to better understand how performative practices might affect English teachers' creativity. As a result of the feedback received from Ofsted, the independent learning project in English has been abandoned. The students will still get their session in the library, but will no longer be allowed to work at their own pace and in their own way. Teachers will give very specific tasks and ensure students complete them by the end of the lesson. Success criteria must be applied to each task and students should know if they are making progress against their end of year English target. Gielen (2013) claims that in this kind of educational environment "whatever cannot be measured is soon set aside" (p.44). I want to know if English teachers' creativity is impacted by performative processes and if they are considered 'mad' if they teach creatively, or deviate from the measurable (Ball, 2003, 2013a; Foucault, 2009a).

1:5 Chapters to come

In Chapter 2 I discuss creativity, outlining its multifaceted nature and its place within this study. I also consider notions of performativity and reflect on the effect it might have on English teachers in terms of their ability to be creative in their work and personal lives.

In Chapter 3 I consider methodological matters that I have reflected on when constructing my research design. I will justify my reasons for choosing my methods and consider my beliefs as a researcher and how they influence the project. I further outline my rationale for using an arts based research method and why found poetry will be an appropriate approach. I will discuss how found poetry will be used as a democratic means to stimulate responses from participants during a semi-structured interview process and then in turn act as a means to present voices for analysis and discussion.

In Chapter 4 I interrogate the creative practices of the participants and their responses to how they see themselves in relation to creativity. I will draw on ideas presented in my literature review (Chapter 2) and analyse and interpret the participants' voices through found poetry. During my presentation of the voices of the participants, I will discuss common themes that have emerged whilst presenting the narrative behind each individual's story and then make links between them.

In Chapter 5 I synthesise my arguments through pulling together three key themes that emerged from the narratives that feature in Chapter 4. I will narrow down ideas into a focussed discussion of the key findings that have come from the research.

In Chapter 6 I discuss my conclusions and findings from the research and evaluate the use of found poetry. I will consider the challenges to this study and the next steps for this research,

including the potential for future exploration. I will then reflect on the contribution to knowledge this research offers.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter focuses on key literature that influences and inspires this thesis. I will interrogate what creativity is and discuss its relevance to this study. In order to question the place of creativity within the lives of the English teachers that are partaking in this study, I will first reflect on the contemporary culture of teaching in England. I will also explore Foucault's (1991) philosophies surrounding surveillance and subsequent writers that contribute ideas to this field of knowledge, including Ball's (2003, 2013b) interpretation of performativity that I briefly discussed in Chapter 1. This chapter will outline the culture the four participants are working in so I can tell the stories that come from the interview process in context. I will outline my methodological approach in Chapter 3.

2:1 Creativity

As with other abstract concepts, creativity is difficult to pin down to a singular definition and occupies an ambiguous place in contemporary reflections (Nicholson, 2005). There is often a desire to reify notions like creativity so they can be turned into theoretical concepts. Reification tries to imply that the notion under question is homogenous rather than an overarching term that could hold within it multifaceted notions and possibilities (Claxton, 2008). Due to the multiple possibilities for what constitutes creativity and therefore what it might look like in the life of an English teacher, I intend to narrow down in this chapter what I mean by creativity. I am mindful, however, of Claxton's (2008) warning about attempting to reify notions such as creativity. During the interview process and subsequent analysis, I intend to interrogate teachers' understanding of creativity to gain an insight as to what creativity means to them in their context. My methods will allow for a reflexive, collaborative approach where I can gain a deeper understanding of the participants' views on creativity in both their work and personal lives. I will outline my methods fully in Chapter 3.

In terms of creativity, I am interested in whether English teachers have the freedom to enquire, innovate and have agency in their roles as teachers. Adams and Owens (2016) highlight how creativity began as a concept linked to the creator from biblical origins, where God made the earth and the creatures upon it. The etymology of the word creativity then moved through to the 18th century where it pertained to "individual practice and as an intellectual faculty" (p.5). The word creativity then became increasingly associated with the arts, with an emphasis on ideas that were original. Adams and Owens (2016) note "[t]he proliferation of the term [creativity] has accelerated under the hegemony of neoliberal thoughts and has become ubiquitous to the point where it has a diminished currency" (p.5). Creativity becomes an overused term that could be seen as indefinite in England as people are unsure of what it actually is and whether it is a positive or negative notion (Compton, 2007).

A scientific theory of creativity is problematic and this means that the term will likely remain open and elusive (Claxton, 2008). Indeed, Boden (1994) states that:

> Creativity is a puzzle, a paradox, some say a mystery. Inventors, scientists, and artists rarely know how their original ideas arise. They mention intuition, but cannot say how it works… What's more, many people assume that there will never be a scientific theory of creativity – for how could science explain fundamental novelties? As if this were not daunting enough, the apparent unpredictability of creativity seems to outlaw any systematic explanation. (p.75)

The notion that creativity is a puzzle is pertinent to this study. I know I will not solve the puzzle, but I hope to make some steps to gaining a better understanding of creativity in relation to a specific group of English teachers who may have differing views of what it is.

Goleman, et al. (1993) suggest that creativity in a pure sense could be the capacity to see things in a fresh way which rests in the willingness of people to query any and all expectations or assumptions. The ability to see ideas or notions in a new way is reiterated by Cropley and Cropley (2008) when they argue "[c]reativity requires doing things differently

from the way they are usually done or even defying the norms of society" (p.360). This could be for an individual to do something completely different compared to anything that has been tried before in the history of human existence, or for that individual to do something differently compared to what they have done before. This ties into what Boden (1994) outlines as ideas of P-creativity (psychological) and H-creativity (historical). P-creativity centres round a notion of a creative idea arising in the mind of someone who has not had that idea before, H-creativity is the concept of a creative idea occurring in the mind of someone that no one else in the history of human beings has had before. This is furthered by Craft (2003) when she highlights differences between everyday creativity and extra ordinary creativity. Everyday creativity is the concept of individuals going about their daily lives undertaking small acts of creativity, trying new things or sharing new ideas. Extraordinary creativity is the creation of new works or knowledge that contribute to an existing area of expertise for example music, art or science. This is expanded further by Craft (2010) and Leavy (2015) as little c and big C creativity. Little c creativity being everyday acts of creativity and big C being extraordinary acts of creativity produced by renowned writers, artists or composers.

Around the turn of the 21st century, there was a new interest in creativity in schools following years of highly inflexible legislation and demanding initiatives from the New Labour government. This was potentially due to a growing concern about "what can happen when test scores are emphasised at the expense of learning, motivation and enjoyment" (Hodges, 2005, p.50). This point is linked mainly to students, although it has resonance for teachers' creativity. In recent times, there has been a return to final examination assessments and a narrowing of the curriculum (Ball 2013b; Gewirtz, et al., 2019; Torrance, 2018). This leaves

creativity in a difficult place in terms of what it is and what relevance it has to English teachers.

Cropley and Cropley (2008) suggest that creativity means to do things differently, whereas Adams and Owens (2016) suggest it is as a means to perceive differently as much as to do differently. In order to do things differently, individuals perhaps need to see the world differently, or at least be willing to or believe they have the space to. Traditionally, the arts favour divergent thinking that requires multiple ways to question problems whilst providing the means for numerous responses that allow for a re-envisaging of the world. Artistic practices should foster critical thinking and provide new ways of seeing ourselves and the world around us (Solé, Sole-Coromina, & Poole, 2020). There seems to be barriers to exploring new ways of seeing, but these can perhaps be resisted or skirted round. Indeed, Adams and Owens (2016) argue "it seems as if we are in an ocean pulled by currents of such depth and strength that it exceeds our imaginations… we may not be able to resist the current, but we can swim in imaginative ways" (p.2). I want to find out more about the effects of the contemporary 'current' in England and explore how English teachers might react and 'swim' in regard to their creative practice.

Winnicott (2010) argues "[i]t is creative apperception more than anything else that makes the individual feel that life is worth living" (p.87). With this in mind, 'artist-teacher' is a term frequently used to describe art teachers in order to outline the idea of a dual practice between teaching the subject and the production of their own art work that is important to them as artists (Daichendt, 2009). Zwirn (2006) argues that "[a]rt teachers are educated to believe that they can and should combine the careers of artist and teacher" (p.167). I am interested to know more about how English teachers see creativity and whether they have notions of

combining the dual practice of a teacher and a writer (for example) and whether this links into their wellbeing and creative apperceptions (Winnicott, 2010).

Furlong (2013, p.5) highlights that "universities are increasingly only one of the many authoritative 'voices' craving attention in our society". New English teachers are increasingly trained in the school environment away from universities, which may impact how they engage with creative practice as they are engrained into school's performative measures more quickly and have fewer outside voices influence their training. From 2010 onwards the Conservative led coalition government's aspiration was that the role of schools as autonomous providers of initial teacher training should be strengthened further under school led initial teacher education. Schools will buy into some aspects of university provision but reduce the overall involvement of universities. These reforms built on previous initiatives like Labour's Graduate teaching programme (Furlong, 2013; Maguire, 2014). Ball (2013b) highlights that the coalition government from 2010 piloted School Direct and did not require free schools to have teachers with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). Training teachers increasingly in the school environment could impact on how teachers understand the performative nature of schools, compared to their more experienced colleagues that would have trained through a more separate university route. This may cause differences in their perceptions of teaching and have ramifications for how they experience notions of practice that differs from performative expectations.

In 2013 a new A level (Advanced Level) in creative writing was introduced to the curriculum in England and then from 2017 it was withdrawn (Bleiman, 2015). Gilbert (2016) argues that "[t]he shutting-down of the A Level means that Creative Writing has lost much of its visibility within schools" (p.1). Creative writing has been assigned to a section of the English

language GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education), meaning that it does not have visibility in and around schools as a separate area of study. With the removal of a creative writing qualification at A level, questions could be posed regarding the symbolic place of creativity in schools. Eisner (1985) noted that "[w]hat school programmes tend to emphasize is the development of a restricted conception of thinking. Not all thinking is mediated by word or numbers, nor is all thinking rule –abiding" (p.98). Writing for The National Association of Writers in Education website, Caldwell (2015) argues:

> The DfE's [Department for Education] guidance and Ofqual's [The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation] principles required reformed A-levels to avoid overlap with other subjects, have clearly defined and rigorous content, and be right for progression to Higher Education. It was concluded to be problematic that there are connections between Creative Writing and English, and that Creative Writing is (or could be construed to be) more skills based than knowledge based.

Perhaps creative writing does not fit in with a neoliberal agenda, as Gielen (2013) highlights "[j]ust as neoliberalism doesn't fully trust the free individual, it is also wary of the potential free space between pupil and teacher in the classroom" (p.6). Through using a multitude of assessments, regimes of power aim to keep the teaching space as manageable as possible. Gielen (2013) furthers this point when he notes that "in the flat world number is king, and creativity in its random, non sequitur, haphazard modes, fares badly" (p.42). This ties back in with English teaching when Gilbert (2016) suggests:

> [F]or league table purposes; a set of poor GCSE English results can affect a school's overall ranking drastically. Perhaps not surprisingly, this has led, in my view, to panic in some quarters, with English students (and less experienced teachers) seeking the magic… 'recipe' to boost their grades; this has led to a growing cohort of pupils following various dubious 'formulas' in order to write the "top grade" story. (p.1)

The use of formulas for students to follow, ties in with the argument that schools are becoming more factory-like as regimes of power try to keep schools manageable through systems of judgement and control (Hutchings, 2015). Zwirn (2006) notes that student art teachers are usually placed in schools that follow a "factory-like model of teaching" (p.168) which affects how they teach art. Despite the idea of practitioners who are both teachers of

art and artists themselves, what happens in practice is that very few art teachers combine the role of satisfied teacher and productive artist (Daichendt, 2009; Zwirn, 2006). If this point is true for art teachers, then it might have ramifications for English teachers and how they engage with creative acts. Having said that, Boden (1994) argues "constraints - far from being opposed to creativity- make creativity possible" (p.79). This work will explore whether potential constraints support, or restrain creative practice and question whether English teachers are satisfied in their role.

Gilbert (2012) discusses how:

> Until quite recently, I had always kept my identities of being an English teacher and creative writer quite separate… doing a PhD in Creative Writing…has changed me. I now see the importance of bringing creative writing systematically into secondary schools with teachers leading by example and showing how they write themselves; my own research shows that this generates reciprocity with students wanting to share their own work more willingly in the classroom context.

I want to know whether other English teachers would agree with Gilbert (2012) about needing to lead by example in terms of creativity, or whether like myself keep their English teacher and creative identities separate. More pertinently, I would like to know more about whether they have the room to even consider creativity in their lives and if they foster it in their classrooms. I will reflect on this in my methodology chapter and later in my analysis of the voices of the participants.

2:2 Setting the scene: the culture of teaching in England

Since the Conservative led coalition came to power in 2010 there has been an increase in how radical reforms in education in England have become (Ball, 2013b; Fuller & Stevenson, 2019). Ball (2013b) highlights that "[the government] have changed key performance indicators… both introducing the E-Bac [English Baccalaureate], and eliminating 2,000 courses from contributing to the GCSE indicator, as a way of changing school practice, and

have raised the benchmark targets for all schools" (pp.136-137). The English Baccalaureate [E-Bac] places emphasis on so called 'core' subjects and marginalises others, such as the arts, technology and sport (Gewirtz, et al., 2019; Long & Danechi, 2019). Ball (2013b) argues that "the creation of the English Baccalaureate… [led to] the abolition of 'non-subjects'… The E-Bac is based on a traditional subject set (5 + GCSE A-C grades including maths, English, a science, a modern language and either history or geography)" (p.107). The development of the E-Bac in English schools, plus the implementation of more rigorous examinations with more difficult content sets a higher standard for students and also for their teachers in terms of accountability (Torrance, 2018). The E-Bac played a part in me ceasing to be a head of drama, as I saw the value of the arts diminish in the culture that emerged. Around the same time, a white paper from 2016 stated:

> All state-funded schools must provide a broad and balanced curriculum… Knowledge of great works of art, great music, great literature and great plays…is an important part of every child's education. So too is being taught to play a musical instrument, to draw, paint and make things, to dance and to act. These can all lead to lifelong passions and can open doors to careers in the cultural and creative sectors and elsewhere. (Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2016)

Activities such as learning to dance became extra to the work of the key subjects that the E-Bac focusses on, with some headteachers having to fight to keep the arts on the curriculum while others bow to performative pressures (Fuller, 2019). The new English GCSEs are assessed solely through final written examinations and function in a culture that limits the presence of the arts on the curriculum. I want to know if this changes how English teachers engage with creativity and the impact a narrowing of the curriculum has on their sense of freedom and agency.

Ball (2013b) argues that the last few decades have seen sequential governments, from various political perspectives, demonstrate a need to be seen to be making changes and addressing problems whilst overhauling systems. Gielen (2013) highlights that the changing of systems

has made it increasingly difficult for teachers to find a voice and question how they function within a progressively performance based system where the field of judgement is controlled by forces outside of the classroom. This control is maintained through the supervision and monitoring of data that is gathered constantly and used to judge how effective a teacher is (Perryman, et al., 2018). This results in the need to perform within a field of judgement which is a designated set of performances that can be used to measure an individual's worth or value within an organization (Ball, 2003). Implications for creativity may come here, as Gielen (2013) states "[c]reative workers have been thrown into deep existential waters with treacherous currents" (p.36) as more demand is placed on measuring students' progress within the elected field of judgement (Ball, 2003; Gielen, 2013). With the measuring of student progress, comes the evaluating of teachers' abilities through performance methods (Ball, 2013b; Perryman, Ball, Maguire & Braun, 2011; Perryman, et al., 2018.) Notions of agency and creativity could become less pertinent to teaching, as teachers may be forced to act in quantifiable ways demonstrated through normalised behaviours within a specified field of judgement.

Ball's (2003) ideas of regimes of accountability talk of an increasing need to measure both teachers and students' performance that draws greater attention to computable skills. Notions of computable, measurable outcomes are embodied in both the E-Bac and a measure entitled Progress 8 that was introduced in 2016. According to The Department for Education (DfE), Progress 8 was introduced as a way to monitor the progress of a student from the end of primary education, to the end of secondary education (DfE, 2014). It is described by the DfE (2014) as "a type of value added measure, which means that pupils' results are compared to the actual achievements of other pupils with similar prior attainment" (p.2). According to the DfE (2014), the performance measures used for Progress 8 are designed to inspire schools to

offer a "broad and balanced curriculum with a focus on an academic core at Key Stage 4 (KS4)" (p.2). Each increase in grade across eight qualifications that a pupil achieves, leads to his/her school achieving extra points in league tables. In essence, this is a way to gauge whether students have met or exceeded expectations of their GCSE grades that are based on their performance in Statutory Assessment Tests [SATs] at the age of eleven. The arc of progression from SATs to GCSEs is sometimes referred to as a 'flight path'. It is students' progress against this 'flight path' that teachers in English secondary schools are partly held to account on in their performance management reviews, but the calculations that create this 'flight path' for students are multifarious and rely upon the legitimacy of the assessments [SATs] taken at age 11 (Torrance, 2018).

In 2018, Brill, Grayson, Kuhn and O'Donnell writing for the National Foundation of Educational Research (NFER) noted that accountability measures stemming from judgements such as Progress 8 could drive schools to prioritise certain parts of the curriculum over others ('teaching to the test'), limit some students' experience of the school curriculum and can affect the overall curriculum policy of schools. Both the E-Bac and Progress 8 outline what is valued within the field of judgement they exist within. I am not attempting to argue the pros and cons to Progress 8, more I am highlighting its existence and the accountability measures it requires. What I will interrogate is whether Progress 8 and the culture it is part of affects English teachers' engagement with creative practices.

Recent changes to English GCSEs include grading solely based on examinations taken in the summer examination series with no coursework completed in school. Equally, English examinations have seen an amplified demand regarding set texts and unseen material, coupled with more open-ended questions necessitating comparison and evaluative reflection.

Within Progress 8, GCSE English Language and Literature have double-weighting for students that undertake both examinations. The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) have also ensured increased similarity between specifications and closely control the content of examination papers and their rigour regarding assessment (Smith, 2015). The pressure on English teachers is increased through the double weighting that English has, alongside Progress 8 being a high stakes performance measure that sets the standard that each school has to reach in order to avoid triggering an inspection by Ofsted (Gewirtz, et al., 2019).

Marsh (2017) explores teachers' perceptions of new closed book poetry assessments in English and reflects on notions of rigour and creativity. Her study highlights how teachers argue that students will not write a good essay about a poem that is analytical and rigorous as they do not have the poem in front of them. In fact, the study found that the end result will be the opposite of rigour because so few students will be able to write in detail resulting in generalised, formulaic responses. Marsh's (2017) study also considers the impact that the new closed book examination had on the ability of students to engage creatively with poetry and in turn, how teachers restrict the range of creative approaches to teaching. This contrasts to the DfE's stated intentions when they noted that from 2015 the purpose of the changes to assessment was "to reform GCSEs so that they set expectations of rigour and challenge that match those in the highest performing jurisdictions" (DfE, 2013).

In 2010 when the Conservative led coalition came to power, Prime Minister David Cameron stated "[w]e want to create an education system based on real excellence, with a complete intolerance of failure" (Cameron, 2011). Torrance (2018) poses questions, regarding whether the challenge this environment creates is too great for many students and what the implications of setting a bar so high through a narrow style of final examination assessment

might be. Making examination results based solely on a final examination paper at the end of a two-year period, could lead to further reductions in courses and more varied teaching methods in the classroom. There will be an increased focus on preparing for tests and a range of international research has also discovered that high-stakes testing at the end of a course leads to examination factories (Hutchings, 2015). According to Perryman, et al. (2011), in contemporary teaching spaces teachers have to find ways to ensure students pass examinations rather than enriching their broader understanding of subjects and place in the world. This causes schools to become preoccupied with procedures linked to measurable attainment in a top-down, command and control approach to authority and governing schools (Gewirtz, et al., 2019). I want to know more about what affect this culture might have on English teachers in terms of their creative practice and what it might do to the potential for a more democratic approach to teaching.

2:3 Performativity

Burnard and White (2008) argue that while trying to raise standards and further accountability for teachers, various governments have created standards and founded measurement systems while concurrently attempting to encourage creativity in classrooms. Conversely, performativity has "marked a disturbing phase in the resetting of education … [T]eachers are required to measure and test students, to report using mandated standards and systems and to teach in state-sanctioned ways" (Burnard & White, 2008, p.2). Pedagogy that might support or allow teachers to develop creative practice is diminished whilst adhering to performative processes, as these processes become the norm or common sense to the point where teachers align their identities with them (Ball & Olmedo, 2013). A government white paper entitled 'Educational excellence everywhere' was issued in 2016 in which the DfE outlined ideas and proposals for further development in education in English schools and

highlighted a perceived need for "timely and accurate data rather than relying heavily on Ofsted judgements" (DfE, 2016, p.22). Watson (2019) argues that the rise of the importance of data and considerations of what is measurable has become more pertinent to the control of teachers in the classroom. Students are tested throughout their school career and the data accumulated is increasingly used to monitor and measure teachers' abilities. The prevalent nature of measurement processes and their ability to become part of teachers' everyday thinking, moulds their identities and reduces other ideas of success and democracy (Apple, 2005).

Jabbar (2013) argues that performance-based management is not new and has been a recurrent and often contentious approach to education reform since the 1800s, with its emphasis on student results, incentive driven notions and business attitudes to accountability. In 1858, the Newcastle Commission set out "to inquire into the state of popular education in England" (Education Commission, 1861, p.7). This culminated in the 1861 Newcastle Report with the recommendation that "distinct inducements to the masters in all schools to bring up their individual scholars, junior as well as senior, to a certain mark" (Education Commission, 1861, pp.274-276). The Revised Code of 1862 introduced a new system of payment by results (Jabbar, 2013) and then between the late 1800s and early 1900s this system was phased out (Midgley, 2016). Ozga (2009) argues up to the 1970s educational government in England functioned through partnership between government and schools, but from the 1970s this was replaced by more goal centred outcomes which was accompanied by the monitoring of targets and teachers. In the 1970s, Prime Minister James Callaghan in his Ruskin College Oxford speech argued "[w]ith the increasing complexity of modern life we cannot be satisfied with maintaining existing standards, let alone observe any decline. We must aim for something better" (Callaghan, 1976). Callaghan's speech is often considered to

have sown the seeds of greater accountability for teachers and set the basis for regimes of truth that now guide performance measures in English secondary schools (Ball, 2013b).

Prior to Callaghan's speech, The Department of Education and Science (DES) Assessment of Performance Unit had been created and Ball (2013b) highlights that its remit was to "seek to identify the incidence of underachievement" (p.129). This set the building blocks for the contemporary performance management structures that place greater accountability on teachers for their students' attainment (Ball, 2013b). Teachers had been central to the examination and grading of students dating back to the 1940s through to the 1960s, when teacher assessment became a key component of the Certificate of Education (CSE) and, to a lesser extent, in the General Certificate of Education Ordinary level (O Level) qualifications which were more heavily final examination based (Torrance 2018). Ball (2013b) explains how through the 1970s and 1980s there developed a "different kind of relationship between central government and the education service, articulated through the setting, monitoring and publication of performance outcome that provided a lever of judgement and basis for critique" (p.130). This basis for critique came with the 1988 Education Reform Act that saw the introduction of a statutory curriculum which necessitated increased accountability as a consequence (Poulson, 1998). It was not until GCSEs were introduced in 1986 that the use of teacher based assessment became politically controversial. Following the late 1980s into the 1990s a balance was struck across the curriculum between teacher-based assessment and externally assessed examinations, "in order to maximise the validity, reliability and utility of the system" (Torrance, 2018, p.4). This system allowed teachers to have some autonomy over how assessments took place in their classrooms, whilst addressing concerns with the validity of teacher led assessment through externally assessed written examinations. In an attempt to monitor the progress of each pupil, the National Curriculum Assessment system

was then set up to evaluate student and school progress. The result was that the cumulative and evaluative purpose of national testing has become more prominent as the system moves towards increased accountability for schools and teachers (Torrance, 2018). I want to know if this narrows chances for creativity and difference in the teaching space, or if it will encourage creativity in the form of resistance (Boden, 1994).

2:4 Neoliberalism in English education

Shamir (2008) considers that neoliberalism is a multifaceted, often disjointed, insecure and even conflicting set of practices that are ordered around a certain notion of the market as a foundation for the universalisation of market-based societal associations. This diffuses into almost every facet of existence through notions of capital amassing and money-making. Neoliberalism, therefore, affects most aspects of life including how teachers work. Neelands (1984) states that: "[i]n schools that foster a traditional curriculum superior status is often attached to those disciplines/forms of knowledge which clearly separate the scientific… from the personal and intuitive" (p.3). Although writing in 1984, Neeland's point can still be applied to schools today where the arts and therefore perhaps creativity is pushed further to the side-lines through the E-Bac and Progress 8 (Gewirtz, et al., 2019). Neoliberalism is filled with distrust when considering free space that individuals occupy and queries whether they make proper use of it. Due to this mistrust, the political agenda of the day begins to control notions of autonomy and develops tools to make freedom measurable, governable and controllable (Gielen, 2013). Maguire (2014) argues that teacher education has been fairly straightforward in terms of arguing for reform in England as it has "regularly been demonised since its inception in the nineteenth century and onwards, right up to the present times" (p.778). Indeed, since the 1970s teachers are increasingly regarded with suspicion and not to be trusted (Ball, 2013b). White (2010) highlights that "[t]rust in teachers and their judgement

has continued to decline as government regard for curriculum and performance standards and accountability have risen" (p.289). Ball (2013b) argues that a low trust in teachers created "the basis for the assertion of more accountability and more control over education and their [teacher's] certification and performance… and legitimates the withdrawal of aspects of their professional autonomy" (p.131). I want to find out more about whether English teachers see a loss in autonomy and explore how this might affect their agency as practitioners. Auditing teachers and conducting inspections, testing and evaluation gives rise to measurement and comparison by numbers (Page, 2017). This ultimately causes teachers and schools to be kept under observation and scrutiny by government, but also by the teachers themselves. This can cause "the professional agency of teachers… to lessen with each successive demand for compliance and performative requirement" (White, 2010, p.292). Ball (2013a) highlights that the loss of teacher agency is furthered by compliance and a requirement to measure performance. These notions can lead to a concept of a loss of freedom through neoliberal practices and I want to know if this affects English teachers' ability to engage with creative practice.

In a 2015 speech, education minister Nick Gibb stated that "education is the engine of our economy" (Gibb, 2015). Equally, Prime Minister David Cameron noted a few years earlier that "[w]hen China is going through an educational renaissance, when India is churning out science graduates, any complacency right now would be completely fatal to our economic prospects" (Cameron, 2011). Education is driven by concerns that are more than about supporting students with their learning and personal development. There are a multifaceted group of forces in relation to beliefs of the market and international competitiveness that are essential in giving a nation an advantage in the global marketplace (Maguire, 2014). Policy making in education has been reduced to a single goal of economic competitiveness which

sees a side-lining of the social purposes of education as people increasingly are moulded to be consumers rather than producers. This impacts on schools as students' conversations are now filled with ideas stemming from performative neoliberalism, as they reflect on education as being a means to get a job and have economic security (Ball, 2013b; Bauman 2010; Keddie, 2016). This stems from the "dominant neoliberal economic and political elites' intent on 'modernising' the economy and the institutions connected to it; economic and cultural neoconservatives who want a return to 'high standards', discipline and social Darwinist competition" (Apple, 2006, p.22).

A focus on codified academic knowledge could have a negative impact on the potential to acquire knowledge through more social means which could affect teachers and students alike (Coffield, 2002). Gewirtz, et al. (2019) argue that the very concept of success in English schools is linked to well established "hierarchies of esteem" (p.8) that place emphasis on academic knowledge over practical understanding where traditional subjects are prioritised over creative or applied ones. In this environment the ability to demonstrate competence in written examinations is valued more than the less measurable effects of the potential to grow within other means of education. Knowledge has become a commodity to be bought in an increasingly acquisitive culture that sees students treated more as customers who want value for money, as education follows a progressively business like model. Coffield (2008) argues for a more participatory, social approach to education that is more democratic, but highlights that notions of an acquisitive culture are so embedded in collective expectations and models of inspection that it is hard to think differently about education. Coffield (1999) noted that "Socrates taught me that knowledge would set me free; Peter Mandelson tells me that its modern function is to make employers rich" (p.490). According to Ball (2013b), the notion that education's sole purpose has been to support the economy has been furthered by

governments ever since. The dangers of a competitive curriculum at its extremes leads to high teenage suicide rates in an extreme performance environment (Adams & Owens, 2016). Moreover, Coffield (2002) notes that neoliberalism hollows out and takes over creative and democratic acts because it needs reproducible ideas and contents. Adams and Owens (2016) advocate for a democratic system of education where creative practices can grow and develop, as opposed to being corroded by neoliberal practices.

2:5 Surveillance: the panopticon and beyond

Foucault (1980) highlights:

> Truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power. Each society has its regime of truth, its "general politics" of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true. (p.131)

Truth comes through what Foucault (1991) calls normalisation which is part of the constraint and power that controls individuals: "[t]he Normal is established as a principle of coercion in teaching with the introduction of a standardized" (p.184). Normalisation has found its way into all aspects of the English school curriculum and supports a field of judgement that dictates what moments of quality are used to judge a teacher (Ball, 2003).

Foucault (1991) argues that punishment of the body through corporal and capital punishment was a key aspect of the 18th and 19th centuries which manifested in spectacles of torture or execution. As time passed, torture was no longer a spectacle or entertainment for the people and became a shadier undertaking behind closed doors. The threat of punishment perhaps became more feared, as it was unseen. As the 20th century dawned, punishment became a craft that allowed for the castigation of the soul, rather than the body. This meant that prisoners started to be neutralised, rather than physically punished:

> [B]y the 'security measures' that accompany the penalty… which are intended not to punish the offence, but to supervise the individual, to neutralize his dangerous state of mind, to alter criminal tendencies, and to continue even when this change has been achieved. (Foucault, 1991, p.18)

This becomes a metaphor for the development of performance management and surveillance processes in education. Performance management processes are multifaceted and take many forms but are deployed to alter, or neutralise the tendencies of teachers. Equally surveillance exists physically in the classroom, but also online through the use of student data and performance management software. Page (2017) argues that teachers operate in "a context of normalised visibility …where they are surveilled from the moment they swipe their staff card to the moment they leave the premises; the multiple strategies of surveillance working together in assemblage" (p.2). Normalisation is a principle that supports surveillance and in turn surveillance of the self. It involves the modification of an individual's behaviour or manner so that they adhere to standards considered to be socially and professionally acceptable, which is an authoritative instrument of power realised through the "hegemonic internalisation of discourses of control" (Perryman, et al., 2018, p.147). The internalisation of the discourse of normative processes means that individuals begin to adopt expected performances by absorbing actions through acceptance of the set narrative. Perryman, et al. (2018) highlight that in an Ofsted inspection context, normative processes are reflected in the way in which a school functions within the prescribed boundaries of what is successful, even if it is not under inspection at that moment in time. Normalisation of processes can be used as a way to guide teachers to function within acceptable norms of what is considered good practice (O'Leary, 2013). If there is an oppression of teachers, it is perhaps not of their physical selves but of their beliefs, identities and their souls (Ball, 2003). The aim of this study is to learn more about how normalising processes might affect English teachers in their teaching practice and what it might mean for notions of creativity in their lives.

Foucault (1991) discusses the panopticon, the design of which consists of a guard tower with windows that can only been seen out of, surrounded by prison cells in a circle. The tower allows a prison guard to potentially monitor the entire prison population without them knowing if they are under surveillance or not.

> He who is subjected to a field of visibility and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection. (Foucault, 1991, p.202)

The incarcerated know that they could be being watched and therefore will change their behaviours as though they were under a constant gaze. In some circumstances, this may have changed prisoners' behaviour permanently as they became what they acted. As a metaphor, the panopticon could be used as a way to describe surveillance practices in schools. Perryman, et al. (2018) argue that surveillance processes are seemingly undertaken by those in power, or through the threat or presence of inspection whether one is taking place or not. This causes teachers to modify their performance in a more lasting manner as the constant pressure causes change before any offence has been committed. Teachers are then subject to peer and self-surveillance as they govern each other. As the panopticon prison design has the potential to permanently change prisoners' behaviour, the surveillance of teachers has the potential to change them also.

Page (2017) argues that schools are now more concerned with future risk as it is the driving mechanism of education in contemporary times and that data systems change the notion of surveillance. The spread of surveillance in teaching is pushed forward by an obsession with risk. Risks being bad inspections, poor examination results and low league table positions. Page (2017) states that the "traditional surveillance – the panoptic – has been rendered obsolete…the panoptic is reactive, observing before judgement in the present tense" (p.3). This presses the need to predict the future as a means of evading risk, implying that the

panopticon has become outdated and has been replaced by a Baudrillardian (1997) style hyperreality that does not so much observe the actions of the teachers in their classrooms, but judges their actions through the data that stems from student outcomes (Ball, 2015). This links to what Perryman, et al. (2018) describe as "panoptic performativity" (p.146) that can function under current inspection procedures. Schools do not know when an inspection may take place and therefore to ensure they are in the realms of safety they act in a perpetual state of scrutiny readiness. It is here where Page's (2017) consideration of Baudrillard (1997) has resonance for this study:

> From a Baudrillardian perspective, the intensification of performativity has moved teaching from a second-order simulacrum – which retains a distinction between 'real' teaching and 'fabricated' teaching – to the third order of simulacra, pure simulation, a hyperreality that replaces 'real' teaching. (Page, 2017, pp. 2-3)

While I believe the panopticon is still an apt metaphor for surveillance of teachers in the classroom, the judgement of teachers is increasingly data driven which could be described as examining teachers' abilities from afar through the hyper-real. The truth of the physical classroom environment perhaps becomes irrelevant; it is how data presents the teacher that matters (Ball, 2015). Baudrillard (1997) argues that reality is substituted for signs and symbols that are not hiding truth, but rather concealing that objects assumed to be 'true' do not exist in the first place resulting in a copy world which is a simulation of something else. The rise of performative culture in schools has allowed teaching to enter the third stage of simulacra which means that it becomes a simulation, where the actual actions in the classroom do not always marry up with the accountability measures that teachers are judged on (Baudrillard, 1997; Page, 2017). This could be summed up when Baudrillard (1988) discussed how "[t]here is no longer any transcendence or depth, but only the immanent surface of operations unfolding, the smooth and functional surface of communication" (p.12). Notions of a lack of depth in the surface of operations in schools are supported by notions of

a performative culture; what is interesting is to consider what this environment might do to a teacher's soul (Ball, 2003).

Ball and Olmedo (2013) argue that teachers are not encouraged to have a relationship to the deeper meaning of what they undertake in the classroom; they are expected to provide measurable and developing performances. "[W]hat is important is *what works*. We are in danger of becoming transparent but empty, unrecognisable to ourselves" (Ball & Olmedo, 2013, p.91). I believe the panopticon is still a valid metaphor for discussing surveillance in the physical teaching space as it can be seen in practices such as the observation of lessons, checking lesson plans and students' books. However, Page's (2017) nod to Baudrillard's (1997) hyperreality is one that is hard to ignore as it implies that regardless of what the panopticon sees in action, it is the data that is monitored from afar that is used to judge the individual teacher and their value in the system (Ball, 2015). Responsibility of the progress of students is often assigned to individual teachers and the students' progress is used to hold teachers to account regardless of issues that may affect students away from school (Gewirtz, et al., 2019). I will be conducting my research in this culture of surveillance and accountability and will explore what it might do to the English teacher and their creative practice.

Ball (2003) discusses ideas of distributed responsibility in what he suggests is a devolved environment where teachers self-regulate and monitor themselves. Notions of teachers self-monitoring links to ideas in secondary education of devolving, or distributing leadership (MacBeath & Myers, 1999). This can be seen in the National Professional Qualifications (NPQ) that form training for teachers in leadership positions at middle, senior and headteacher level (DfE, 2019). The process of devolving leadership or authority ultimately

encourages, or demands that teachers self-regulate (Ball, 2003). In a guide to NPQs there is a statement that the courses will teach participants how to "[d]istribute responsibility and accountability throughout the school to improve performance" (DfE, 2019). Adams and Owens (2016) consider that in a culture dominated by neoliberal thinking, freedom can be replaced by deceptions of autonomy. Indeed, in my experience of NPQ courses I have been instructed to engage with ideas of empowering teachers through notions of devolving leadership to them and giving more autonomy; that autonomy is perhaps limited to controlling the self.

Ball (2003) questions whether the ideas of empowerment ultimately demand that teachers monitor their own progress, aware that they could be being watched or monitored making them more performative in their approach.

> [T]eachers are represented and encouraged to think about themselves as individuals who calculate about themselves, 'add value' to themselves, improve their productivity, strive for excellence and live an existence of calculation. They are 'enterprising subjects', who live their lives as 'an enterprise of the self'…as 'neo-liberal professionals'…value replaces values - commitment and service are of dubious worth within the new policy regime. (Ball, 2003, p.217)

I intend to explore whether this environment affects how teachers see themselves as creative practitioners. Ball (2013a) highlights "the operation of discursive practices is to make it virtually impossible to think outside of them; to be outside of them is, by definition, to be mad, to be beyond comprehension and therefore reason" (p.20). This implies that it is increasingly difficult for teachers to free themselves of restrictions that stop them from thinking, or acting, outside of the practices they are normalised into. The DfE (2016) argue that "[a]n effective accountability system ensures that professionals are held accountable for the outcomes of their decisions using fair, intelligent, reliable and carefully-balanced measures of success and failure. These measures must avoid creating perverse incentives or unduly hindering innovation" (p.24). I will explore if accountability measures linked to the

meeting of targets support a normalised vision of education and the English classroom and question whether teachers have space to resist.

2:6 Summary

In this chapter I have discussed literature and existing theories that are relevant to the elected focus of my study. I have highlighted ideas surrounding what creativity is and what it might be in relation to the participants in this study. I have outlined the cultural context in which the participants in this study are working, including notions of performativity and normalising processes. My literature review highlights how there is space for further research into the place of creativity in the lives of English teachers in a secondary school in England within the current educational context. In the next chapter I will outline my methodological considerations that underpin the research in this work.

Chapter 3: Methodology

In this study, the views of four English teachers will be gathered through a series of semi-structured interviews that focus on creativity in their lives. Each participant will be interviewed separately on two occasions. The words from these interviews will be transcribed and then used to create found poems which will be reviewed in the second round of interviews with each participant. The poems will then be analysed and presented in Chapter 4 with an accompanying interpretation and narrative. This chapter discusses the methodological concepts that underpin this research design.

Increasingly, researchers using a qualitative approach engage in critical and experimental forms of enquiry that are designed to stretch the imagination of both the researcher and the reader (Adams, Cochrane & Dunne, 2012). I intend to stretch my imagination and that of any readers of this work, through the use of poetry to explore the participants' views of creativity in their lives. Pushing on from this, I also intend to stretch the imagination of the participants themselves. The term 'Arts Based Research' originated from an educational event in 1993 where Elliot Eisner provided an outline of what research guided by aesthetic features might look like. As the 21st century dawned, what started as a glimmer became a beacon for many educational researchers who were looking for a way in which to rethink how research might be conducted (Barone & Eisner, 2012). I will discuss how the arts based method of found poetry will serve the dual purpose of eliciting deeper responses from participants during the second semi-structured interview process and then act as a means to present the participants' voices for analysis and the construction of a narrative. Geertz (1993b) argued that a "good interpretation of anything – a poem, a person, a history, a ritual, an institution, a society – takes us into the heart of that of which is the interpretation" (p.18). It is my objective to take this research into the heart of creativity in the lives of a small group of English teachers in an

English secondary school. I intend to interpret the views of the participants, while better understanding my own position in regard to creativity (Zimmerman, 2015).

3:1 Aims and overview of the research

My research has the key aim to explore English teachers' perceptions of creativity in their lives. I will engage with found poetry as a means to analyse the ideas of the participants, elicit new responses from them and present their voices.

To achieve the aims of the research, I will address the following key research questions:

- Do the English teachers featured in this study see themselves as creative?
- Do the English teachers featured in this study value creativity?
- Does a performative culture affect how the English teachers in the study believe they can have agency to teach and support creativity in their lessons?

Finally,

- Can found poetry provide a way to present the voices of English teachers that is novel, but illuminating?

I intend to explore the questions above through a qualitative approach. Qualitative research is multifaceted and made up of an interrelated collection of terms and ideas which are varied, nuanced and often complex (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). There are seven historical moments in qualitative research, the current one being concerned with ethical discourse and ensuring that qualitative enquiry becomes a place of critical conversation about democracy, globalisation, freedom and community (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). Clough and Nutbrown (2007) argue that as "qualitative research designs become ever bolder, the need to discover a 'methodology for ourselves' in each study will become increasingly necessary and

increasingly challenging" (p.x). I have developed a methodology for this study that is designed to support the key purpose of allowing me insight into the place of creativity in the lives of a group of English teachers. I intend to do this by presenting their voices through the novel and illuminating approach of found poetry that will support critical conversation and a democratic approach to research.

3:2 Theoretical overview

Positivism is an epistemological position that encourages the need to emulate the natural sciences to the study of a persuasive reality and believe it is conceivable to conduct research in a detached way (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). The positivist paradigm is not apt for this study as I am interested in understanding the voices of my participants in a way that does not contemplate an absolute truth or way of representing knowledge. Maynard and Cahnmann-Taylor (2010) discuss how the classic image of ethnography "typically features an anthropologist spending extended time in another society, documenting local actions and thought, accounting for patterns in human behavior [sic]" (p.4). The rigid conventions of ethnography are evolving and become more experimental as qualitative researchers work in more innovative ways to engage in new dialogue regarding the cultural realities portrayed in ethnographic expression. Smith (1993) argues that researchers need to give up on the possibility of certainty in research and, similarly, reduce the expectation for a rigid way in which to judge the quality of research. By working from a standpoint that reality is not stable and open to change, guides me in how I will collate and interpret the voices of the participants in a world in flux. I am interested in the individual thoughts, viewpoints and beliefs of the participants in terms of how they see the world they work in and how creativity functions and is represented there. Researchers implementing a qualitative viewpoint have a desire to understand people's views of the world. They pursue understanding rather than

statistical examination and are doubtful as to whether social 'facts' exist, querying whether a 'scientific' method can be utilised when researching people (Bell, 1999). Human beings want to understand the situation they find themselves in and better comprehend the nature of the occurrences their surroundings present to them (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2005). Denzin and Lincoln (2003) note qualitative researchers in the 21st century have moved from storytelling and developing ethnographies into deeper considerations of how to localise themselves in and around their areas of focus. I will be localised in my chosen area of focus as I work within the same English secondary school as the participants in his study. This will allow me to gain new insights into English teachers' perceptions of creativity within the world in which they work and live, whilst considering how the culture they work in might impact on them as creative practitioners.

Reality is layered with numerous truths and constructed over many integrated and well-established signs and symbols which can hold many readings (Fontana & Frey, 2003). Qualitative researchers are concerned with accessing these multiple meanings in their data, which links to critiques of positivism through its tendency to offer common truths that results in the silencing of many groups of people (Leavy, 2015). I believe this arts based research will give voice to a group of people that may not often have their opinions of creative practice heard within the culture of teaching in England (Leavy, 2015). Arts based research is becoming more established as an acceptable form, especially if it uses "boundary-pushing, qualitative methodological approaches" (Clough & Nutbrown, 2007, p.14). It can become a means to extend beyond potentially limiting constraints of discursive communication and explore meanings that would otherwise be inexpressible (Barone & Eisner, 2012). These ideas have inspired me to engage with the use of poetry as a means to tell participants' stories as well as eliciting deeper responses from them. Clough and Nutbrown (2007) discuss how

"the right 'feeling' is seldom discussed as a rationale for deciding on methods of data collection and analysis in educational research" (p. 91), but it often plays a significant role in the selected methodological choices. Feeling plays a part in my decision to choose poetry as a means to both analyse and further discussion in the interviews; it feels right in a piece of research centered in creativity.

3:3 Creative approaches

As I intend to interrogate creativity in the lives of English teachers, I believe it is valid to use the creative approach of found poetry to interpret the voices of the participants. Butler-Kisber (2002) argues that "[i]ncreasingly, educational research suggests that the more traditional, textual descriptions of qualitative findings do not adequately reflect the complexity of studying human behavior [sic]" (p.229). With this in mind, I am drawn to found poetry as a tool for analysis and representation. Clough and Nutbrown (2007) argue that "[w]hat we mean by radical looking is exploring beyond the familiar and the (personally) known, to the roots of a situation: this is exploration which makes the familiar strange" (p.24). I believe that exploring English teachers' understanding of creativity from a fresher standpoint, could offer me a new way of understanding or seeing through the use of an artistic expression such as poetry. The poetry may offer a new, critical view of the lived experience of English teachers which could then encourage a more divergent way of thinking and seeing the voices of the participants (Solé, et al., 2020). The poet and playwright Bertolt Brecht set out to achieve Verfremdungseffekt in his work. Verfremdung is to 'make strange' allowing theatre audiences to become critical of what they are watching on stage, as opposed to more popular naturalistic theatre audiences that Brecht considered were not engaging their critical consciousness. The familiar was made strange in Brecht's theatre in order for individuals to see events differently to how they might otherwise have done (Willet, 1977).

Similarly, I have been inspired to approach my research through found poetry as a means to look at the voices of the participants in a manner that differs from more conventional qualitative methods so that I can be offered new perspectives and challenge both mine and a reader's understanding (Cahnmann-Taylor & Siegesmund, 2008; Maynard & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2010; Owens & Pässilä, 2020).

Clough and Nutbrown (2007) further discuss ideas of the radical regarding listening, when they highlight the need to give careful attention to all voices that may be heard on a given topic. My own voice will always be in this work as I am sharing the narrative and I am also a teacher of English in the same setting as the participants in this study. There are the voices of the participants that I will aim to capture as honestly as possible through a reflexive approach. Finally, there are the voices from my literature review as they drive this research by providing the ideas that underpin the exploration and subsequent analysis. I intend to capture what is present in the interview process and then use poetry to push beyond what is assumed to exist in search of new insights. Radical reading offers the validation for "the critical adoption or rejection of existing knowledge and practices" (Clough & Nutbrown, 2007, p.26). Regarding the reading of participants' voices, I intend to critically reflect on the information in front of me and then explore the presentation of knowledge through using found poetry.

Leavy (2015) argues that arts-based research methods are predominantly valuable for research projects whose purpose is to describe, explore, or discover through representing the "unfolding nature of social life" (p.12). Poetry is appropriate to explore feelings of uncertainty and dislocation in social life that can emerge when undertaking a study into a culture. It can offer the researcher a puzzling freedom to be honest, or more open regarding observations and feelings of a situation and allows the words captured to remain relevant and

fresh for years to come (Maynard & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2010). Leavy (2015) argues that "[q]ualitative researchers do not simply gather and write; they compose, orchestrate and weave" (p.10). The way I gather and then weave the words for the poetry is important to ensure a relevant and fresh view of the participants' voices. I will discuss how the poems will be composed later, but first I will outline how I will collate the voices of the participants that will form the basis of the poetry.

3:4 Interviews

Fontana and Frey (2003) discuss how a structured interview aims to capture a detailed set of data that is codeable in nature and allows behaviour within pre-established groupings to be explained. This is contrasted to non-structured interviews that endeavour to comprehend multifaceted behaviours of members of a culture without imposing any notions that may bind the area of exploration. My rationale for finding a middle ground in a semi-structured interview is that I will start the discussion with a general question about what creativity is, but then the participants can respond in a conversational manner offering them the chance to freely explore their perceptions of the multifaceted notion of creativity. Clough and Nutbrown (2007) discuss how qualitative researchers use the term 'interview', but often it is in the form of a one-to-one conversation with a set of questions used to guide participants if needed. Conversation is inclusive in its nature as it supports, reassures and brings out individual voices in a sense of community (hooks, 2019). This will provide responses that can be compared and offer richer, more democratic data that is more participant led due to the semi-structured interview process.

The participants will all be teaching the new GCSE English specifications for English literature and English language that were introduced in England for first examination in the

summer of 2017. The teachers will range from a recently qualified teacher, to a teacher of over thirty years, to allow for a range of opinions and experiences in this focussed study. This will enrich the data, as a breadth of experience will be captured. When interviewing people Clough and Nutbrown (2007) discuss how individuals may need thinking time to sit back and be silent, whilst contemplating new ideas in their mind. In this research I will be individually interviewing each participant twice with a gap of approximately two months in-between interviews. As the interviews are one-on-one, I believe that allowing a break between interviews will give the participants time to reflect on what they have said and then potentially further their points, or change or amend their ideas in the second interview. To support the participants' reflections, two weeks prior to the second interview I will give them a copy of the transcript from the first interview. As well as the transcript, I will provide the participants with a series of found poems that will have been created directly from their own interview transcripts. Utilising this arts-based approach could evoke new ideas and understanding (Leavy, 2015) of the English teachers' perceptions of creativity in their lives. This is because they will see their ideas presented to them in a novel manner, allowing them to respond and evolve the study through a participatory approach that aims to delve deeper into feelings and ideas behind their words (Owens & Pässilä, 2020).

During the interview process, I will maintain an awareness of the importance of not asking leading questions and allow the voices of the participants to come out (Clough & Nutbrown, 2007). The interview will start with an open question: "what is creativity?" This is to explore what the word creativity means to each of the participants. As I discussed in the previous chapter, there are multiple arguments (Adams & Owens, 2016; Boden, 1994; Craft, 2003; Cropley & Cropley, 2008) about what creativity is. I believe it is important to give the participants chance to discuss what creativity means to them in their context. The only other

points I have planned to interject on in advance, are a query as to creativity in the working lives of the participants and a second query centred in their creativity away from the work place (if the flow of the interview does not go there itself). The rationale behind this is to keep the interviews more conversational in manner and to give the participants a chance to lead the conversation and discuss what creativity means to them (Clough & Nutbrown, 2007; hooks, 2019). It is a strength of my study that I am localised in the same school as the participants as I have a working relationship with them, which I believe will support me in putting them at ease (Clough & Nutbrown, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). Having said that, Denzin and Lincoln (2003) argue that the interview is not a neutral device; it is there for a least two people to create the reality of the interview situation. Interviews are also influenced by the personal characteristic of the interviewer and, although I believe that my localisation in the school is positive, I cannot escape the fact that there will be biases and power relations that I am aware of and some that I perhaps am not. Reflexivity will be important to attempt to mitigate any power imbalances as I will discuss in more detail later.

It is because of my experiences teaching in secondary schools that I believe I can better understand the responses of the participants because I have a unique insight into the nature of their working lives. This gives me knowledge that improves my interpretation of the participants' responses to the questions posed and strengthens my position as a researcher. I will keep a journal, or sketchbook of my reflections during this process that will help me to strengthen my considerations of the semi-structured interviews and allow me the opportunity to reflect on my reflexivity. A sketchbook is a personal space for reflection without a pre-determined arrangement or product where my ideas can be both textual and visual. Orthodox written language is usually characterised by linear ideas driven by logic and balanced reasoning. The sketchbook offers a mixture of visual expressions and text that gives space to

multiple ideas, ambiguities and creativity (Moate, Hulse, Jahnke & Owens, 2019). My sketchbook will support a reflexive approach to this research and allow me to consider my own ideas alongside those of the participants.

After recording the semi-structured interviews, I will transcribe them within one month and then undertake a thematic analysis of the transcripts. Once I have located key themes in the voices of the participants, I will then set about presenting the data in the form of found poetry. I hope this approach will allow for new insights into the experiences of English teachers regarding creativity and that it may challenge conventional ways of seeing English teachers and their experiences (Cahnmann-Taylor & Siegesmund, 2008; Leavy, 2015). The poetry will be used to represent the voices of the participants, but also be a means to inspire further responses through subsequent interviews. Participants will receive a copy of the transcript from our first meeting before the second interview. This will give them time to reflect on what they said the last time we met, before meeting with me again where they can further or amend their thoughts on creativity in their lives. The copy of the transcript is to give a visual reminder of what was said, which should strengthen the validity of their voice as they can check they still believe what they articulated captures their thoughts fairly. I will also provide the participants with found poems that stem from their interview transcript. The use of found poetry in the second interview will be a way to make the familiar strange and potentially provoke new responses from the participants, as they will be offered a new way of seeing their own voices and thoughts on creativity (Clough & Nutbrown, 2007).

3:5 Reflexivity

Clough and Nutbrown (2007) discuss that researchers are infrequently separate from their research focus and that any notion that there is a clean, sanitised approach to research is a

myth. There is always an element of the researcher's personal views in any project to the point that the researcher and the research is always tangled. To mitigate potential bias, it is important to demonstrate a clear, rational and reflexive association between research queries in the collection of data. Geertz (1993b) argues that "anthropological writings are themselves interpretations…fictions, in the sense that they are 'something made,' 'something fashioned'" (p.15). When I interrogate the interviews, I will maintain awareness that I will be producing a narrative of the culture I am observing, that comes from the way I see the world. I am mindful that I am a secondary school teacher and carry with me experiences from that social world. Geertz (1993b) notes that ethnographic research ultimately becomes "constructions of other people's constructions" (p.9). Geertz's point highlights how what is conveyed in ethnographic research is a version of a truth, built on the truth under observation. Bell (1999) argues that ethnography "enabled the researchers, as far as possible, to share the same experiences as the subjects, to understand better why they acted in the way they did" (p.13). I am mindful that I can never see a situation in the same way as the participants, however my closeness to the focus of the research gives me insight into their views as Geertz (1993a) noted, ethnographies are "crafts of place: they work by the light of local knowledge" (p.167). I have the local knowledge to support my interpretation of the participants' voices. Bell (1999) highlights an issue with the representation of others within a group: "who is to say that group is typical of other groups that may have the same title?" (p.13). Through this research I am not aiming to tell the story of all English teachers in England, I am aiming to tell the story of English teachers in a focussed group that may correlate with the views of teachers of English elsewhere.

Foucault (1991) said that "[p]ower produces, it produces reality" (p.194). As a researcher I am aware that I have the power to produce a reality from the voices I interpret and while I

will strive to be as objective as possible, I also recognise that there will inevitably be a subjective aspect to my interpretation as I will bring a lifetime of experience that shapes how I see the voices of the participants. Contemporary qualitative research has destroyed the myth of an impartial observer, as the qualitative researcher is not a politically unbiased viewer looking in from the outside but is rather historically and locally positioned within the practices being explored (Denzin, 2016). Heyl (2001) claims that reflexivity necessitates the "ethnographic researcher to turn the anthropological lens back upon the self" (p.378). The procedure of broadening the research lens to embrace myself, not only expands the field of study, but challenges views about truths and objectivity. When I study the voices of the participants, I will maintain awareness that I will be exploring them from my frame of reference that will bring with it an inherent bias. Geertz (1993a) argued:

> The concept of culture I espouse… is essentially a semiotic one. Believing… that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning. (p.5)

I am working within Geertz' (1993a) webs of significance that I both am caught up in and weave myself as I write. The meaning I find will be a combination of what is there and what I find from my own perception of what is significant. To counter this, I will keep a sketchbook of my thoughts on various experiences to compare and contrast with the participants to allow me to both better understand the words of the participants and ensure that I am reflexive and aware of my own influence within my findings. Through a reflexive approach meanings become more negotiated between the researcher and the participants within the research process (Clough & Nutbrown, 2007; Finlay, 2002; hooks, 2019). The narrative I will be exploring is the story of English teachers in a secondary school in England, but it is being told by me. Pillow (2003) highlights "[t]o be reflexive…not only contributes to producing knowledge that aids in understanding and gaining insight into the workings of our social world but also provides insight on how this knowledge is produced" (p.178).

3:6 Poetry in research

Butler-Kisber and Stewart (2009) highlight that the use of poetry in research dates back to the 1980s, but there was increased interest in the 2000s alongside other arts based methodologies. Prendergast (2009) argues that poetic examination is part of a growing interest in arts-based methods. Equally, Faulkner (2009) discusses the value of poetry as a way to explore research ideas. Brady (2009) argues that instead of "being inverted like a telescope for a distancing effect, poetics turns it back around for magnified encounters with life as lived, up close and personal" (p.xi). Similarly, Leavy (2015) argues that poetry offers "heightened moments of social reality as if under a magnifying glass" (p.79) and therefore has the potential to play a part in research. Prendergast (2009) suggests that, with some contextualising for the best appreciation, poetic research is a way to "synthesize experience in a direct and affective way" (p. xxii). I aim to use poetry to support a new way of seeing and representing the voices and experiences of the English teachers in this study.

'Found Poetry Review' was a poetry journal that aimed to support the sharing and appreciation of found poetry in the current and ordinary (Baker, 2014). Found poems appearing in the journal featured poets creating poetry from words found in places such as novels, newspapers and text messages. The poets would search for key ideas or themes and would piece together a poem directly from the words in the source material. Found poetry in research works in a similar way through the researcher searching for key themes and ideas in transcripts of interviews. Butler-Kisber and Stewart (2009) discuss how a researcher is not obliged to find the 'perfect' word but rather experiments with existing words from interviews in ways that represent a specific story. This is different to autobiographical or generated poetry, which comes from the researchers themselves to express their understandings of the experiences they have and how they see the experience of others. I will be using found

poetry to present the voices of the participants, but I will also use autobiographical poetry to support my reflections. I will keep a reflective sketchbook and it is likely that some of my notes will take the form of poetry, which could be described as autobiographical or generated (Butler-Kisber & Stewart, 2009).

3:6 (i) Creating the poetry and method of analysis

Boyatzis (1998) discusses how qualitative methods have often struggled to be accepted in the mainstream areas of social science research. One of these reasons is due to a lack of methods for linking the world of qualitative and quantitative research alongside there being a large array of information in qualitative sources that has often eluded or overwhelmed researchers. One of the difficult tasks in relation to qualitative research is managing the amount of material that faces a researcher. Qualitative approaches in research are diverse, complex and nuanced, but thematic analysis can provide a core method for qualitative analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The use of thematic analysis is a means to manage data and is a process of encoding qualitative information throughout the analysis process. Braun, Clarke and Weate (2016) discuss how thematic analysis will allow for the identification of patterns of significance within a qualitative dataset. In this study's case that is the interviews and then the subsequent poems that contain the voices of the participants. Thematic analysis is not rooted in a specific theoretical framework and lacks set notions or methodological requirements in how to sample data. This allows the researcher notable flexibility in how thematic analysis is used as an open form of qualitative analysis. This makes it an admirable and vigorous method for those wanting to undertake fairly descriptive work and also offers the potential for flexible, nuanced, multifarious, and interpretative analysis.

Braun, et al. (2016) discuss a 'flexible' version of thematic analysis which gives the researcher vigorous procedures for identifying patterns and interpreting data in diverse ways, but detaches ideas from "specific, or inbuilt, ontological and epistemological anchors" (p.2). This flexibility will be important to me as I create found poetry from the interview transcripts. The freedom from anchors demands the researcher makes active decisions about how they engage with data, whether on the level of the obvious meaning or the meaning that underpins the notions stated by participants in the study. The first point is a semantic focus, meaning researchers are coding and reflecting on clearly stated notions. Braun, et al. (2016) use the example of women reporting feeling embarrassed about not partaking in exercise and a researcher then developing a theme around embarrassment. This would be the development of a semantic theme which can be built on by coding and further developing analysis around more inherent notions that reinforce what is openly articulated by participants. If women experiencing their non-participation in exercise as embarrassing, this could indicate that 'exercise' lies in a moral framework and refraining from exercise leaves people feeling individually culpable. To capture this, a theme could be developed around 'exercises as moral or good'. Once key themes are established researchers will then look at the meanings that underpin them. Braun and Clarke (2019) have discussed how as their notions of thematic analysis have grown, they increasingly welcome what they call 'mashups' and creative usages of thematic analysis that use a mixture of methods providing they are completed in a thoughtful and deliberate manner.

I intend to explore the voices of the participants in this study using a flexible thematic analysis and present the findings using found poetry. Butler-Kisber (2002) argues that an arts based approach would "lead inevitably to new insights and under-standings" (p.229). She encourages the selection of a representational form that best suits the researcher and what is

to be communicated. I believe that capturing English teachers' voices through poetry is a fitting form of representation and may offer new insights as it presents an area of exploration in a novel manner (Owens & Pässilä, 2020). "Whatever we call the poetic work… written by those, like myself, who define themselves as primarily social researchers or even those who choose the label researcher/poet, an important concern is what constitutes good and effective poetry" (Faulkner, 2009, p.2). Faulkner's (2009) interest in what constitutes quality poetry was seeing poems that she conceives to be "sloppy, ill conceived, and unconsidered" (p.2). She highlights that even poetry that is published as part of academic research should still be concerned with poetic craft, noting how "one poet I talked with about craft told me that 'whatever you crap out is not a poem' and another reiterated that poetry isn't poetry until there's revision" (Faulkner, 2009, p.2). All great poets will have revised their work and I believe that found poetry also needs revision.

Frye (2006) argues that the job of a poet is not to inform a reader what occurred historically, but rather to discuss what is taking place now. He argues that audiences do not attend the theatre to see 'Macbeth', or read it to be informed about Scotland's history but rather engage with the play to "learn what a man feels like after he has gained a kingdom and lost his soul" (p.457). Audiences might see a bit of a fictional, literary figure in themselves and therefore this brings into focus many new ideas and ways of seeing. This ties into poetry as it is a means to communicate the participants' voices in such a way that challenges pre-existing notions, builds understanding, promotes mindfulness of another's position and stimulates dialogue (Leavy, 2015). According to Prendergast (2009), at its best poetry in research "will carry within it the power to move its audience affectively as well as intellectually and will deal with the kinds of topics that lead into the affective experiential domain" (p.xxii). Found poetry does not need to compete with literary greats, but rather stand as a method of

capturing voices and expressing people's thoughts in an enlightening fashion.

For Butler-Kisber (2002), the creation of found poetry requires her to return to her data many times to look for the subtleties to create was she calls "a kind of mental kaleidoscope of the sights and sounds" (p.233). She then begins to pull together key words and phrases that appear in what she describes as a chained narrative and then experiments with words to create rhythms, pauses and emphasis. The poetry is reshaped over time in order to check the essence of the story has been captured. After conducting the first round of interviews, I will analyse the interview transcripts looking for key themes, patterns and ideas that emerge from the words of the participants. This will provide me with initial themes and ideas that will construct a narrative. Clough and Nutbrown (2007) argue that "all research requires… an investment in time and learning, but most (if not all) social research involves the researcher 'feeling' the research setting to some extent" (p.31). The right 'feeling', or perhaps hunch, is seldom discussed as a foundation for determining methods of data collection and analysis but it can play a central role and "is an important methodological consideration" (Clough & Nutbrown, 2007, p.91). It is a mixture of thematic analysis and the right feeling based on my experience of writing poetry, which will lead me to take lines from the transcripts that carry the words of a key theme, in chronological order and place them into free verse poetry. I will discuss free verse in more detail later. I will not change any of the words out of respect for the participants nor will I add additional words (Owens & Pässilä, 2020). I will omit selected words that do not seem to further meaning, place the remaining words in a structure and choose when to start and end the poems. As I discussed earlier, it is often considered that quality poetry has revision (Faulkner, 2009). Revision of the poems will come in the form of omitting sections of text in search of capturing the most important messages, stories or themes within the dialogue (Butler-Kisber, 2002). Then, I will experiment with the structure of the poetry attempting to draw out the key points for emphasis. Butler-Kisber (2002)

argues that poetry has a performative element to it and suggest that reading it aloud can help to fine-tune the work. So to, Owens and Pässilä (2020) argue that "poetry lends itself well to performance" (p.100) and I believe through performing the poems out loud will support me in the creation of the poetry and assist with the balancing of rhythms and emphasis. It will be free verse that will allow me to stay as true as possible to the words of the participants and therefore capture their voices.

Free verse is not accurately quantifiable by rules found in more traditional verse, as it does not adhere to regular rhythms or a set meter (Wesling, 1996). Most modern and post-modern poetry demonstrates a preference for the imitation of spontaneity of unremarkable daily language (Baumann, Hussein & Meyer-Sickendiek, 2018a). A free verse approach will allow me a freer way to express ideas in a poetic form and for the purpose of this thesis means that the words of the participants will not need to be changed, nor will I need to alter the order in which they were spoken in search of specific rhyming patterns. Having said that, I recognise Butler-Kisber's (2002) points about the need for the creation of rhythms, pauses and emphasis. This will often be achieved through the structuring of the poems, rather than adapting or substituting any words. Enjambment is significant when crafting free verse, as it transports the sense or the structure from one line of verse to the next without a pause, unless it is indicated by punctuation (Baumann, Hussein & Meyer-Sickendiek, 2018b). To put it simply, I believe using enjambment means that I will capture participants' voices more truthfully as it will allow me to flow the lines of speech from the transcripts through the free verse. Or to put it another way:

To put it simply, I believe
using enjambment means that
I will capture participants' voices
more truthfully, as

it will allow me
to flow the lines of prose
from the transcripts through
the free verse.

By truthfully, I mean not needing to change the participants' words which will result in a more truthful, respectful representation (Owens & Pässilä, 2020; Prendergast, 2009). Having said that, when it comes to revision (Faulkner, 2009), I can adjust the structure of the poems to place emphasis on certain lines or ideas to emphasise key points or ideas.

Eagleton (2007) discusses free verse's break from more traditional poetic forms when he says "[p]erhaps because modern life is felt to be somehow dissonant, a good many poets begin to abandon the use of rhyme as we enter the modern age" (p.132). In a world that lacks harmony, then rhyme and measured meter perhaps lose their place as poetry that is more disjointed could maybe capture a fragmented world better. I believe that what free verse lacks in structure it makes up for in its freedom of expression and will allow for the capturing of a snapshot of life with the potential for deeper feeling.

Faulkner (2009) interviewed the poet Katherine Soniat who highlights that when creating poetry from interview based research, she does not use her source material verbatim as she is concerned with the poetry becoming "coldly encyclopaedic" (Faulkner, 2009, p.3). This expresses a concern that I have myself when putting the words of the participants into verse. It is important to me that the poetry is not just a placing of the words on the page. It must capture something more than prose, whilst looking and feeling like a poem that offers a new way of seeing the voices of the participants. I do not claim that the poetry in this research will be 'good' in the sense that it will be worthy of comparison to renowned poetic writings. I do believe, however, that the poems will stand as examples of research poetry that capture

the voices of participants in this study in a manner that allows for new understandings.

Once the poetry has been created I will share it with the participants alongside the transcripts in the second interview. The poet Eavan Boland (2017) suggested that notions of collaboration are not usually associated with poetry as readily as with music or drama and that the only collaboration is with the poet and the page. Increasingly some poets are starting to collaborate in poetic work and this may allow for a meeting point, offering a space to find each other. Sharing the found poems with the participants will enable me to have a discussion with each of them about how they see the presentation of their voices in the poetry created from the interview transcripts. This is important to me as they will have, in many ways, written the poetry with me by providing the words and ideas that I will use to create the poems. Leavy (2015) argues that arts-based practices can promote dialogue which can be essential to cultivating understanding. This can be through conversation driven from emotional responses that can support higher levels of engagement. This links into Adams and Owens' (2016) reflections on democracy and the potential to emancipate through democratic practices. A dialogue will be important in the process of this research, as I want the poetry to serve as a means to communicate meaning but also provoke a discussion within the second semi-structured interview. This will allow for a more democratic space to support understanding as the participants will see what has been written and be able to discuss whether they feel their voices have been truthfully captured. Examining the poems with the participants will provide another level of scrutiny of my interpretation of their voices and support me in deepening my confidence that I am working to capture their voices as fairly as possible.

During the second interview I will discuss creativity again with the participants and explore their responses to the found poems. I will then create more found poems from the second round of interviews which will include participants' further consideration of creativity and their reaction to the first round of found poetry. This, in some cases, may result in the creation of found poems about reactions to found poems. The poems will become a means to both capture voices and evoke responses. This duality of function will support me in making the familiar strange for both myself and the participants in this study and I believe will allow me insights into the participants' ideas that I would not have otherwise have had. Leavy (2015) suggests that "[t]he arts, at their best, are known for being emotionally and politically evocative, captivating, aesthetically powerful, and moving. Art can grab people's attention in powerful ways" (p.12). I hope that the poetry created in my exploration will grab the attention of the participants and spark a reaction I may not have had without it and then in turn engage of any readers of this work and offer new insights.

3:6 (ii) The validity of poetry in research

As arts based research has developed and grown in popularity, so to have questions surrounding the validity of such methods and whether they can be trusted and authenticated. Leavy (2015) notes that there is no specific model of appraisal concerning knowledge derived from qualitative methods. The success of any research project is linked to how well the methodology facilitated set objectives and communicated research findings. Barone and Eisner (2012) highlight how arts based research presents ideas with a deeper understanding and can also be a starting point for further inquiry. I firmly believe that using poetry as a means to capture the participants' voices will be clear and illuminating. My approach is relevant and will facilitate the exploration of this area of study whilst giving me a view that I would not have without the poetry. Through utilising the poetry as a means to represent

participants' voices, but first using it during the interviews to involve the participants in the process adds an extra level of validity.

The poet Seamus Heaney wrote:

> This is how poetry helps us live.
> They match the meshes in the sieve
> Life puts us through; they take and give
> Our proper measure
> And prove themselves most transitive
> When they give us pleasure.

(Heaney, 1996, p. 37)

Heaney reflects on how poetry can capture the fluctuations of life, but can also transport or move readers to new ways of understanding or thinking. Poetry can help readers to know their own situations in a clearer way (Heaney, 1996). It can be difficult to articulate what poetry does; it may move us or change us in a manner that might be considered spiritual, or relating to a sense of soul. Equally, the meaning in a poem can perhaps be flexible and change according to the life circumstances of the reader. It is often difficult to pin poetry down, which is why it is notoriously challenging to mark or measure (Dymoke, 2001). As with 'pure' poetry, research poetry can develop a human response that can reflect life and transport the reader to new ways of thinking.

Leavy (2015) highlights how "[a]rts-based research often evokes emotional responses (intentionally) from audiences. Ascertaining information about audience response may therefore serve as another validity check (as well as a data source)" (p.18). Through giving the participants a transcript of their words and a copy of the found poetry I hope to discover their responses to what is written. It will allow me another level of validity as they respond to both the prose of the transcript and the verse of the poetry. Having a dialogue about the art can pose the question of whether the audience experience a representation they are given as

'truthful' (Leavy, 2015). In the following analysis in the next chapter I will discuss how the participants react to the poetry and whether they feel it captures their voices. Wiggins (2011) notes how the use of found poetry is an "analysis process that became a journey to an unfamiliar place and, ultimately, to a new way of conceiving analysis and a new way of seeing" (p.1). I am interested in whether English teachers' voices take on a new life in the form of poetry, whilst offering a new way of seeing their experiences.

3:7 Ethics

Oliver (2010) noted the importance of doing "everything possible to retain a sense of dignity and worth for everyone involved in the research process" (p.5). The traditional ethical points to consider pertain to informed consent, the right to privacy and protection from harm (Fontana and Frey, 2003). I have addressed these three points as I have sought and received permission in writing from the headteacher of the school in which I am conducting the research. All of the participants will complete a participant information sheet (see Appendix A) that outlines the rationale for the research, the participants' role and their right to withdraw from the process; each participant will give recorded consent when each interview commences. Participants will be anonymised in order to shield their identity. During the interviews, participants may discuss other teachers or students who are not directly involved in this study and their identities will also be anonymised.

I have given thoughtful consideration as to how the data will be stored and later disposed of to ensure participant data is protected. Following the University of Chester's guidelines for ethical consideration, I have submitted my research proposal to the ethics committee within the Faculty of Education and Children's Services and have received permission to commence my research. I have an existing working relationship with the participants and will undertake

this research tentatively as I know I will be exploring new ideas with the participants and some of the conversations may become more personal. Therefore, I will be mindful to approach the interview processes sensitively and reflexively as my responsibility to them as a researcher is different to that as a colleague. Fontana and Frey (2003) suggest that in the end researchers need to exercise good judgement and take responsibility for their participants, the study and themselves as researchers. I have done this by interrogating the power relation between me and the participants in the context of the school setting. Through the methods I utilise, I intend to offer the potential for a democratic approach and emancipation through my use of arts based methods (Adams & Owens, 2016). Through a semi-structured approach to interviews, I will give the participants opportunity to lead discussions in a manner that is more conversational in approach (hooks, 2018). Revisiting the first interview with the participants will allow them opportunity to respond to the representation of their own voice, which will provoke further discussion and deeper reflection.

I have a number of things in common with the participants, I am an English teacher and I work within the same setting with expectations on my teaching that are the similar if not the same. I am aware of the complex nature of power relations within the school and acknowledge that I hold a middle leadership position and therefore I am conscious of my position of power and trust. I believe through the nature of the semi-structured interview and revisiting the first interview with the participants, I can support a more democratic approach to this research and attempt to mitigate any power imbalance. I have also acknowledged my own position in relation to this research in my introductory chapter. Earlier, I outlined the importance of reflexivity to this study. I will also remain aware of my role within the exploration and the power I hold as both a researcher and a colleague of the participants. The knowledge that I produce in my analysis will stem from the participants' voices and I will

strive to tell the stories as truthfully as possible, but all the while I know I must be mindful that it is me that will be telling their stories.

Pillow (2003) argues because of its numerous uses, reflexivity has become related with or used as a measure of validity and soundness in qualitative research. Listening and writing with a reflexive approach are often defined as apparatuses to aid situating a researcher in a position that reminds them of their individual history and how that affects exploration of their own perceptions and beliefs that inform the narrative. It is a desire to maintain a reflexive awareness and limit bias that has led me to keep a sketchbook of my thoughts while completing the interviews and analysis. I think it is important that my own voice is not ignored, but rather acknowledged and utilised to better understand the voices of others. Geertz (1993a) stated "anthropologists don't study villages, they study in villages" (p.22). I am an English teacher in a secondary school and the school becomes my village; I am an insider. I am localised in the culture of the English secondary school I work within (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). I am aware that I must make sure I do not make assumptions of what is being said based on my own bias, but equally I am well placed to tell the story of those I have interviewed as I am working in the same environment and have a unique insight into the responses of the participants; this gives me legitimacy and reliability in this qualitative research (Pillow, 2003).

3:8 Summary

In this chapter I have rationalised the use of poetry and argued for the validity of using an arts based method in this research. My goal is to explore creativity in the lives of a focused group of English teachers. Through utilising poetry as a means to both present findings and elicit further discussion, I believe I have a methodological approach that will provide the insight I

require into the lives of the participants in this study. Equally, it will provide me with a tool to present my findings in a way that gives a new resonance to the voices of the participants. Adams and Owens (2016) suggest "creative acts are directly responsive to oppressive practices, revealing and dissemination the truth of a situation" (p.18). A performative culture in which the participants work has the potential to be oppressive. The creative act of making poetry to capture the voices of my participants might allow for new insights into the lives of English teachers, as it could become an emancipating form stemming from restriction (Boden, 1994). I have already outlined my personal engagement with poetry. I do not consider myself to be a good poet, but I am a poet never-the-less and I believe that this gives me the validity and knowledge to use poetry as a means of exploration in this research. The found poetry that will be produced may not be beautiful big C creativity (Craft, 2010), but it might capture something; it might provoke a discussion and provide me with insight I would not have without it. I have also outlined ethical considerations and the importance of reflexivity to the work I am going to undertake.

In the next chapter, I will interrogate the voices that come from the semi-structured interviews. I will discuss key themes that emerge from the interviews and utilise found poetry as a means to represent the voices of the participants.

Chapter 4: Presentation and analysis of voices through poetry

In the previous chapter I outlined my methodological approach to this study. In this chapter I will discuss the findings from the research I have undertaken which explores creativity in the lives of four English teachers in an English secondary school. The voices of the participants will be presented through found poetry with an accompanying narrative and exploration of emerging themes. I have created numerous poems during the analysis process and not all of the poems will feature in this chapter (Butler-Kisber, 2002). The poems that do feature are the ones that tell the story of each participant whilst contributing to the broader collective narrative of the participants. The remaining poems are located in the appendices and further support the general narrative and ideas discussed in Chapters 4, 5 and 6. O'Connor (1996) argues that poems cannot stand alone and need an interpretation to make sure that the voice is clear. I have offered my interpretation of the poems as a means to guide the reader through the narrative. Through my telling of the participants' stories, I offer an interpretation of their voices whilst acknowledging that the reader can also take their own meanings from the poetry and my interpretation of it. I will use the literature discussed in Chapter 2 to underpin my interpretation. In Chapter 5 I will discuss the key themes that emerge from this chapter in more detail and synthesise the arguments.

Through a reflexive approach I have aspired to remain as detached as possible so that I can represent the participants' views, however I am a teacher of English myself and therefore my interpretation is formed and shaped by my own knowledge and experiences. I have taken this to be a strength as I have a level of insight into the lives of English teachers that other researchers from outside the field of secondary English education may not have. I am well placed to interpret the voices of the participants and construct, as truthfully as possible, the narrative that follows.

4:1 Laura's story

At the time of the interviews, Laura had taught English for twelve years and was a middle leader with responsibility for aspects of the English curriculum. When discussing creativity Laura had many ideas that she wished to share and was keen to offer her views. The semi-structured nature of the exchange between Laura and me allowed her to express her ideas freely. I believe this is because the interview was relaxed and in a manner that was conversational in approach. Concerning conversation, hooks (2019) argues that "conversation contains dialogue, the exchange of understandings and meanings in the endeavour to construct between information. Conversation is always inclusive; it encourages and nourishes individual voice as it strives to develop a community of vision" (p.44). There is a danger in interviews that the interviewer is the one in power as a researcher seeking answers, but Laura seemed empowered by the nature of the semi-structured approach as she was encouraged to speak freely on a topic that she appeared to care about (Clough & Nutbrown, 2007). The themes and the found poetry that emerged from the discussions in the semi-structured interview started to tell Laura's story. Stories are important to who we are and how we interact with the world around us (Mead, 2011). Indeed, hooks (2019) notes that "[s]tories help us to connect to a world beyond the self. In telling our stories we make connections with other stories" (p.53). This is valid here as when I analysed Laura's story I noted similar themes and ideas being shared by the other participants. There is something that binds the collective understanding of English teachers in their experiences of creativity which will be explored in this chapter and Chapter 5.

4:1 (i) Laura and creativity in English

The following found poem emerged regarding Laura's view of English teaching at secondary school level.

I think

I think we've become
more factory like.

I think we have
all become so focussed

on results, that it does
sap away
some of the

creativity.

(Laura, 2019)

Laura begins with "I think we've become more factory like" (Laura, 2019). It could be inferred that the "we" are schools in England and the teachers and students within them. If schools are a factory line (Hutchings, 2015; Zwirn, 2006), questions arise about what is being made and what drives the process. Eisner (1985) argues that in relation to the school curriculum "the fields that are most amenable to measurement are measured and those that are difficult to measure are neglected" (p.14). Measurement stems from the breaking up of complex forms of learning into smaller sections, or aspects of behaviours. Those behaviours are then monitored through systems to determine if micro performances laid out have been achieved. This is encouraged by a structure of rewards and a minimum set of standards to assure the public that the quality of education is high. This system then allows for the management and control of school curriculums and day-to-day functions. In order to measure attainment, systems of monitoring are deployed which underpin the measuring process and support the factory like approach (Ball, 2003, 2013b; Hutchings, 2015).

We have become "more factory like" (Laura, 2019) suggests diminished professional agency and a change to the identity of both teachers and schools. Perhaps the word that is most pertinent is 'more'. Schools have possibly always had an assembly line approach to some

extent, as students have passed through the systems that have gone before, but a more automated assembly line has emerged in recent years to keep schools and teachers more manageable (Ball, 2003, 2013b; Hutchings, 2015). This is driven by an increasing focus on the need to measure, and then monitor performance procedures which leads to the production process that Laura highlights. The automation of life in schools could be argued to come through inspection and performance management processes creating a culture of performativity (Ball, 2003, 2013b). Ball (2003) argues that:

> Performativity is a technology, a culture and a mode of regulation that employs judgements, comparisons and displays as means of incentive, control, attrition and change – based on reward and sanctions (both material and symbolic). The performances… serve as measures of productivity or output, or displays of 'quality', or 'moments' of promotion or inspection. (p.216)

Teachers and schools are kept under observation and scrutiny which may restrict autonomy through power structures that manifest within secondary schools. This links in with Laura's point when she says "I think we've all become so focussed on results" (Laura, 2019). In a factory-like process there is the potential that teachers end up teaching to the test (Brill, et al., 2018; Hutchings, 2015; Torrance, 2018). This means that they fill the students with knowledge they think they need for an examination, but this could have detrimental effects on a more holistic, creative learning experience for both the teacher and student. Freire (1996) discusses what he describes as a banking approach in education, where individuals go through a process of:

> [R]eceiving, filing, and storing… deposits. They do, it is true, have the opportunity to become collectors or cataloguers of the things they store. But… it is the people themselves who are filed away through the lack of creativity, transformation, and knowledge in this (at best) misguided system. (p.53)

In a factory like process, there is the potential that students are filled with knowledge that they only receive from teachers, as opposed to engaging with and reflecting on the world in a more critical manner. This could also be true for the teachers themselves as their creativity and agency is likely reduced. Freire's (1996) point is particularly striking when he suggests

that the individuals themselves are filed away due to a lack of creativity. This supports the idea of a threat to the teacher's soul and how teachers have been changed as people (Ball, 2003) as they are filed away; what is left of their identity is a deliverer of a curriculum in an assembly line. Freire (1996) continues:

> [I]t turns them [students] into "containers," into "receptacles" to be "filled" by the teacher. The more completely she fills the receptacles, the better a teacher she is. The more meekly the receptacles permit themselves to be filled, the better students they are. (p.53)

Teachers fill their students with knowledge to help them to pass an examination, but there is little creativity and collaboration in that process. It is perhaps Freire's (1996) banking approach that Laura's (2019) use of the verb "sap" could link to, as the word could imply a slow erosion of creativity, a gradual loss, indicating that it has been a slow process that has become normalised over time (Ball, 2003; O'Leary, 2013; Perryman, et al., 2018). The teachers sap away the students' creativity, through draining their own. In Laura's words there is an implication of a monotonous production like process that has an impact on both the students and Laura as a teacher. Wright-Mills (1977) discusses how workers in a variety of settings can be considered robots. These workers go about their daily routines without questioning what they do, to the point where they might become "cheerful robots" (p.189). The current education system in England needs teachers that teach the curriculum and work towards examinations without enquiry, or deviation. This could create a robotic teacher, but to what extent they are 'cheerful' is questionable.

4:1 (ii) Laura and the past

The course of the conversation with Laura led her to look back to the past and reflect on changes to education she had seen and how she felt she had changed within the system as time passed.

I remember

When I was training in 2006,
creativity in English
was a huge focus.

We were constantly being
encouraged to approach English
through dramatic devices.

I remember we had to do some
visualisation activities;

we had to paint pictures;
we had to write poems.

When I first started, quite a lot of
my English lessons were creative;
we basically

had
freedom
of
choice.

There was no such thing
as any set texts; we could do
any assessment that we wanted
in any way we saw fit.

I remember getting into the hall and
we had drums and
we had musical instruments –

I remember doing Victorian literature
with my class, dressing up as a Victorian
teacher – making students wear dunce
caps, inspecting their finger nails,

doing a kind of an
immersive
lesson.

It felt genuinely creative back
in those days. There was

more time to do everything

and the teachers were given
far more autonomy.

It felt like we were encouraged to

approach the lessons in a more
unconventional way. There seems to
be so much more focus now on the
need to memorise this,
memorise that.

I don't feel I am as creative now;
I feel like I'm more formulaic –

that it is because the exams are
far more formulaic.

(Laura, 2019)

According to Laura (2019) when she trained as a teacher over a decade ago, "creativity in English was a huge focus". Laura speaks fondly of using little c creative acts such as dramatic devices, painting pictures and having the time to write poems with her classes. Little c creativity allows individuals to use their imaginations and push the boundaries of what is already there with the goal of exploring other possibilities (Craft, 2010). There is a sense of agency in Laura's reflections as she highlights that she had the space to engage with the subject of English in a manner that offered her freedom to explore the topics she was teaching.

The poem begins with a positive tone as Laura discusses ideas linked to play and "freedom of choice" (Laura, 2019). 'Freedom' and 'choice' are two of Laura's (2019) words that stood out to me. The structuring of the sixth stanza, where the key words sit diagonally across to the right, descending through the stanza stresses Laura's (2019) emphasis at the time of the interview:

we basically

had
freedom
of
choice.

Brady (2009) argues that poetry sets out to make sense of endless things that are then "filled with the rhythms of breathing, the music of life itself, albeit sometimes broken and off-key" (p.xv). Laura's reflections were often disjointed, as people often are when articulating their thoughts. I have presented this beautifully fragmented nature through the discordant structure of the poem. Laura speaks freely as she reflects on a loss of freedom or autonomy in her professional life and to her creative self. According to Gewirtz, et al. (2019) if Laura was working in a lower stakes accountability driven environment then she would have greater flexibility to deviate and teach in a manner that is more responsive to the needs of the classroom. Poole (2019) discusses the need for the time and space for autonomy, as it has helped him to develop his understanding of the values he captures in song writing. Much in the way a songwriter constructs songs through creative autonomy, so to teachers like Laura could develop a more autonomous, creative approach to teaching if given the space to do so.

A new interest in creativity in teaching English was prominent around the time that Laura was training to teach (Hodges, 2005). Laura looks back to this time with a notion that she had freedom to explore new ways of seeing English subject content and for her and the students to use that freedom to understand knowledge in a less restrictive space. This links to ideas articulated by Freire (2001) when he said "to teach is to create possibilities for the construction and production of knowledge" (p.49). Laura's (2019) view of the past was that her identity as an English teacher was one that was creative and she was able to create possibilities in the space where she taught her lessons. Laura believes that participation of her and the students was greater because they were working in a freer environment meaning that knowledge was gained by participation rather than teaching to the test. Freire (2001) resonates, when he argues, "teaching is not just transferring knowledge" (p.49). As the poem moves on, the freedom from earlier seems to be drained away as the tone changes and

becomes more negative; contemporary teaching becomes more about transferring knowledge than a chance to create possibilities for creative practice. Coming back to Freire's (1996) point about the banking concept of education, he notes that "[t]he "humanism" of the banking approach masks the effort to turn women and men into automatons — the very negation of their ontological vocation to be more fully human" (p.55). Laura (2019) notes that her identity as an English teacher is more formulaic now as she feels she has to teach to a test. There is often little room for deviation or exploration as I will discuss later in relation to the other teachers I interviewed.

In my literature review I noted Gielen's (2013) argument about how neoliberalism utilises methods to make autonomy quantifiable, manageable and controllable and to then keep it that way. Laura (2019) is caught up increasingly in having to measure "this and that" which shows little sign of abating. Eisner (1985) notes:

> Schools whose quality is judged in terms of the test performance of their pupils tend to emphasize what the tests test. This means that the fields not tested are considered less important than those that are, at least operationally…the playhouse is being replaced by the bookshelf; reading is tested and play is not, hence play is considered intellectually unimportant in school. (p.6)

In Laura's lessons it seems that the playhouse has certainly been replaced by the bookshelf, or by a stricter regime of assessment that is narrower but lends itself to measurement (Page, 2017; Perryman, et al., 2018). Teachers that may wish to adopt a pedagogical approach that might seem like play or be more creative, will find that it will likely be dispensed with rapidly in an examination driven performative culture. Adams and Owens (2016) argue that the arrival of neoliberalism in education has "generated much intellectual discussion about what we understand and value in education, and why the neoliberal turn is so corrosive to arts and creative education" (p.32).

Freire (1996) highlights a need to build critical consciousness in individuals: "[i]ndeed, the interests of the oppressors lie in changing the consciousness of the oppressed, not the situation which oppresses them" (p.55). This could lead to questions about why Laura (2019) perceives that she is more formulaic; her identity has perhaps been changed by the system she is in. The teaching spaces Laura and the other participants work in are increasingly under surveillance (Ball, 2013a; Page, 2017), raising questions of who is watching and what is being sought in this system. Foucault (2009a) argues that order is enforced by physical and moral constraints that stem from the pressure of the group and the requirements of a performative culture. Teachers are under pressure to be seen to teach in a normalised manner (Ball, 2003) that consists of them working within increasingly rigid formats that normalises their identities with less space to be creative. Foucault (2009a) highlights how there is the pressure of the group to all follow the same normalised approach, enforced by a requirement of conformity. A performative culture requires conformity enforced through a terror filled system that uses comparison and judgement as a way to control teachers through a process of attrition. The way in which a teacher looks within a field of judgement is based on their performances that can be measured and then their worth can be calculated (Ball, 2013b). Continuous judgements become a process of attrition that will change a teacher permanently over time.

Laura knows that she will need to present displays of quality for appraisal purposes, but more than that there is the pressure of the collective group approach and Laura's own self surveillance that restricts her. Laura dressing up as a Victorian school teacher in a mock Victorian classroom to help students creatively understand life in Dickens' England, perhaps now seems a frivolous act that leaves her othered as it is the behaviour of the mad (Ball, 2013a; Foucault, 2009a). It is problematic to use data to measure the impact of Laura's

costume or the deployment of a prop dunce hat. It is easier to mark a grammar test as it has been reduced to a series of emphatic right and wrong answers. It is easier to measure the measurable and judge a teacher's ability based on the data that follows (Ball, 2015). Creative approaches to teaching are perhaps not measurable and therefore their worth is diminished within the field of judgement that the participants in this study are working within; this impacts on the identity of the teachers as they start to change their actions to fit a computable system (Ball, 2003, 2013b; Gielen, 2013).

There is a theme of nostalgia in Laura's poem with an idea that things were better in the past. When Laura started teaching, it was prior to the coalition government of 2010-2015 and a decade before the new GCSEs implemented by the Conservative government from 2015 onwards. However, Marshall (2010) highlights that:

> Charles Dickens, the Victorian novelist, uses the classroom to highlight his anxiety about the effects of growing industrialization: it is not simply the putrid air that can choke a child but the education system itself with its emphasis on facts, on mere information, at the expense of imagination. (p.120)

If Dickens was concerned about the education system not supporting imagination and creativity in Victorian times, then Laura might be looking back to her earlier teaching days through rose-tinted glasses. The world perhaps changes for people as they age and could become unrecognisable to the one seen in youth. In W.B. Yeats' poem 'Sailing to Byzantium' he notes:

> That is no country for old men. The young
> In one another's arms, birds in the trees,
> —Those dying generations—at their song,
> The salmon-falls, the mackerel-crowded seas,
> Fish, flesh, or fowl, commend all summer long
> Whatever is begotten, born, and dies.
> Caught in that sensual music all neglect
> Monuments of unageing intellect.
>
> (Yeats, 1967, p.104)

The poem follows the story of an ageing man travelling to a new world in search of spiritual guidance. It contains key themes of aging and how it changes a person leaving them feeling like they no longer belong in the world. The poem carries notions of searching for a sense of identity, soul or purpose. Ball's (2003) notions of the teacher's soul have relevance here, as soul in a performative culture is perhaps under question causing teachers to query their sense of purpose either verbally or in their hearts (Jardine, 2005). "That is no country for old men" (Yeats, 1967, p. 104) highlights how the world has a reduced space for older people, as they might feel left out of the world they used to know as it has been changed. This is perhaps the case for teachers; I could paraphrase the opening line as "that is no system for creative teachers". Many experienced, creative teachers find themselves in a position where they have to change the way they teach and possibly who they are in order to fit with normative pressures; if they do not, they run the risk of being left behind (Ball, 2003).

4:1 (iii) Laura and performativity

In 2011 Prime Minister David Cameron talked of a system with a total intolerance of failure (Cameron, 2011). Ideas such as this have supported stricter examinations and a narrowing of the focus of education (Torrance, 2018) through increased use of surveillance and data in schools, ensure the measurement of student and teacher progress takes place (Ball, 2003, 2013b, 2015; Page, 2017; Perryman, et al., 2018). This is found in Laura's (2019) reflections when she talks about being less creative now: "I'm far more formulaic – that is because the exams are far more formulaic". I noted in my sketchbook at the time of the interview that there was sadness in Laura's voice as she said these words. I had not fully considered how emotive a discussion this might become. I now read Laura's reflections as being a lament, almost like a loss of something has occurred. Eisner (1985) discusses the idea of a teacher proof curriculum that requires teachers "function as automatons rather than as professionals

who have a stake in what they are doing in classrooms" (p.56). In a performative culture Laura's creativity and agency has been eroded through normalising processes and left her as a deliverer of an examination specification. This results in her no longer recognising the place she thought she knew. This echoes again in Freire (1996) when he talks of humans becoming automatons. Equally Wright-Mills (1977) has relevance here with his notions of the robot who may have a feeling of apathy leading to a loss of the individual, the self, or perhaps the soul (Ball, 2003). As new teachers are trained within the current system, they may not see the school in the same way that Laura does. This increasingly creates an education system that is progressively no place for experienced, creative teachers who wish to resist the pressures of a performative culture. I will come back to this later.

Performative measures on secondary English teachers stem from data based on student progress linked to KS2 SATs scores.

> We need a new approach to the National Curriculum, specifying a tighter, more rigorous, model of the knowledge which every child should expect to master in core subjects at every key stage. In a school system which encourages a greater degree of autonomy and innovation the National Curriculum will increasingly become a rigorous benchmark, against which schools can be judged rather than a prescriptive straitjacket into which all learning must be squeezed. (Department for Education, 2013)

During the process of interviewing the participants in this study, I have not found themes surrounding ideas of clearer levels of autonomy and innovation (Department for Education, 2013). If examinations have a tighter model of knowledge, then this could squeeze autonomy and innovation from teachers as they resort to teaching to the test, contributing to a loss of creativity due to a reduction in space to act creatively. The examinations undertaken by students at the end of year 11 provide notions of validity (Torrance, 2018). In one of the GCSE English Language examinations, students have an hour to undertake a creative writing task where they craft either a narrative or a descriptive piece of writing based on a stimulus.

When asked about the mark scheme for the creative writing section of the GCSE English Language examination, Laura had some ideas that have resulted in the following found poem.

Mark scheme

I am concerned that it's trying
to make everybody fit in one mould.
It feels very formulaic – I think
it's very subjective. My

big issue though is that
how are they supposed to do
this in, what? Thirty-five to forty
minutes? That's what I think

is an absolute joke. I'd swear
if I wasn't being recorded.

I think it's just totally
artificial.

(Laura, 2019)

Laura (2019) notes that examinations set out "to make everybody fit in one mould". This would correlate with the DfE's (2013) notions of a tighter model of knowledge. Laura (2019) does not see room for innovation in this model, but then complying is her only option if she wishes to maintain her position as a teacher even if it results in the loss of professional agency and a change to her identity (White, 2010). Ironically, the creative writing section of the English Language examination perhaps does not allow for creativity in a broad sense. If a student created work that did not fit in with the mark scheme, then they would miss out on marks in the examination; this is restrictive of innovation and autonomy. I will discuss the impact of the mark scheme to which Laura is referring to throughout this chapter.

Questions arise surrounding how creative the creative writing section of the English examination is for the students sitting it. Equally, the ability of teachers to deliver learning sequences that are creative is also called into question when teaching the current GCSEs in

English. Eisner (1985) notes "we have been professionally socialized to accept simplistic assumptions about acceptable methods of educational inquiry, methods that leave no room for non-scientific forms of understanding" (p.16). Perhaps the only way that English teachers in England can teach creative writing is through a 'scientific' form. Either that, or they have to deliver lessons that allow the creative writing to be understood through a scientific manner of measurement that is validated through analysis of data (Ball, 2013b; Dymoke, 2001; Torrance, 2018). Mark schemes are not new, but as English has moved away from coursework (Torrance, 2018) to a final examination system that is underpinned by various surveillance techniques that measure teacher performance, there is the potential for creative practice and professional agency to be restricted.

4:1 (iv) Laura and assessment

Laura teaches media studies as well as English and unlike GCSE English, media studies still has a teacher assessed component (coursework). Media studies is a separate qualification offered in a large proportion of English secondary schools at GCSE and A level and is often taught by English teachers. Coursework is perhaps a chance for students to demonstrate greater levels of creativity, as they have time to craft a piece of creative work over time and with a broader choice of tasks than they would face in a written examination (Torrance, 2018). Coursework in media studies consists of students developing radio broadcasts, promotional materials for new films and music videos; teachers also have a role to play in the creative process. Laura invests a lot of time in supporting students with their creative work and engages in the process herself. This collaboration comes through acts such as offering feedback through dialogue, location hunting for film sets and often appearing in student productions. Being part of the creative process in media studies is something I am familiar with myself. Like drama, the creative process in media studies supports the teacher and

student working together in a more collaborative environment. The following found poem comes from Laura's reflection on a selection of completed media studies' coursework.

Media coursework

I felt so proud.
I just looked at these production
pieces without thinking
"what mark is this worth?"

"What grade will this get?"
Just actually looking at them
and thinking there's some
really beautiful, interesting,

exciting, wonderful pieces
of work here that sixteen and
seventeen year olds have
produced. Looking at the

creativity that is clearly
evident. I felt
really proud;
really happy.
The bit where
it becomes somewhat
tinged –

let's line them up and
let's make a judgement on
whether Sally's is more
creative and better than Alex's.

(Laura, 2019)

The poem begins positively as Laura (2019) talks about her feelings and how she was proud of the work the students have completed. What is interesting about the use of 'proud' is that on first listening to the interview and then reading the transcript back, I considered Laura's pride to be of the students. Now, I see the word 'proud' also links to the work Laura has completed herself. A creative process has the potential to be a collaborative effort with different models of communication, distinctions and power relationships where the teacher

facilitates the creativity of the students whilst being creative herself. Freire (1996) notes how:

> Through dialogue, the teacher-of-the-students and the students-of the-teacher cease to exist and a new term emerges: teacher-student with students-teachers. The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teaches. They become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow. (p.61)

Laura perhaps grows in the dialogue she has had with students in media studies and in that space there is a difference to her identity as an English teacher. She maybe feels a general sense of pride in the media studies' coursework, as she is jointly responsible for the creative process that made it. Laura follows the idea of pride with noting that she felt really happy (Laura, 2019). When Laura talks of happiness in the present sphere of teaching, it usually links to a creative act. Laura's (2019) pride is followed by "really beautiful, interesting, exciting, wonderful pieces of work here". The adjectives used to describe the students' work are positive. I do not consider there to be any hyperbole on Laura's part; I sincerely believe she considers the students' work to be all of the things she claims. The positive language used to describe the creative work contrasts greatly with what comes later in the poem. Laura (2019) describes the latter assessment process as "tinged" and discusses a negative view of assessing the creative work. Her point seems to be one of criticism towards assessment and what the measuring of creativity does to a piece of creative work in its attempt to make it measurable.

Regarding creative writing in English, Dymoke (2001) highlights how once the creative process is completed the scientific method of assessment must be applied to allow the students' progress to be measured. Assessment of poetry was a particular problem as it is often a personal creation that is difficult to assess. This resulted in the NEAB (Northern Examinations and Assessment Board) advising teachers not to encourage their students to

write poetry in the creative writing section of the English examination at the time Dymoke was writing. Dymoke's (2001) point stills has relevance today as teachers play safe with creative writing as they increasingly teach to the test (Hutchings, 2015; Torrance, 2018). Poetry is no longer a form that features on the creative writing section of English language examinations; most likely because it is difficult to assess and measure and is therefore pushed aside. Laura (2019) seems to tap into this notion with her use of "tinged" which suggests that the assessment process does something negative to what was perhaps a positive, creative process. What is interesting about grading creative work in any subject is that it requires a narrowing of creativity in order to fit in with a mark scheme. This will impact on teachers' creative innovation within a performative culture that requires the measuring of progress. I will address this point in more detail when I analyse the other participants' narratives later.

4:1 (v) Laura and her creative self

Approximately ten years ago Laura performed in a play as part of an amateur dramatics company. The performance won awards for the quality of the production. Laura had no prior acting experience before taking part in the play and has not performed in an organised performance since. Even though I was aware of the performance, it was Laura that brought it up in our conversation. The following found poem emerged from her reflections on how she felt undertaking a role in the production (which she considers a creative act) contrasted with how she feels about her creativity now.

Adrenaline rush

It's quite depressing the more you
think about it. A few years
ago I was doing amateur dramatics.
It was performing just in

a little am-dram production
which I really, really loved.

‘Little’.
‘Just’.

Laughs.

You know, this is your proper
job and then this is something
you’re going to do a little
bit of on the side when

you can squeeze it in.
There were quite a few
barriers put up to it.
I had to really fight to

be allowed to do that.

A sense of satisfaction.

I felt like teaching
had taken over my life.

Am-dram:
I really enjoyed the
challenge of learning lines,
co-operating, bouncing off others -

that adrenaline rush.
Definitely -
the adrenaline rush, of

having that sense of
satisfaction – pulling it off –

it’s coming together.

(Laura, 2019)

The found poem begins with Laura (2019) talking about her feelings regarding her reduced participation in creative acts. The use of ‘little’ and the ‘just’ is Laura acknowledging how she used language to belittle the creative act of performing in a play. It is an on-going theme in Laura’s reflections and (as I will discuss later) in the other participants’ reflections on little c acts of everyday creativity (Craft, 2010). There seems be a need to belittle the process of creativity as it differs from the measurable business of work. The use of the words ‘little’ and

'just' are both perhaps Laura's (2019) way of hiding something about how she feels about creativity and how she sees herself as a creative individual. Freire (1996) argues:

> Self-deprecation is another characteristic of the oppressed, which derives from their internalization of the opinion the oppressors hold of them. So often do they hear that they are good for nothing, know nothing and are incapable of learning anything – that they are sick, lazy, and unproductive – that in the end they become convinced of their own unfitness. (p.45)

Through exploring the voices of the participants in this study, I have noted that a belief in their own creative abilities is perhaps lacking. School systems may not literally tell teachers that they know nothing and are lazy, but the undertones to a performative culture could imply that staff are not good enough as they are subject to constant comparison and judgement that measures their worth (Ball, 2013b).

Laura's (2019) passion comes out through the use of repetition: "I really, really loved it", "I really enjoyed it". Laura has a passion for the creative act of performing in a play that is other to her work as a teacher. She notes the collaborative aspects of her theatre production and the importance of "bouncing off others" (Laura, 2019) in a collaborative space, which does not appear in her reflections on teaching. When this poem is contrasted to the poem 'I remember' it is clear that over the last decade, for Laura at least, there has been a change to the creative freedom she once enjoyed. This appears to have affected her as a teacher and as a person away from work (Ball, 2003). This has a negative impact on her creative identity in the evolving teaching space.

After the first round of interviews, I gave Laura a copy of the transcript and the found poems that had emerged. Laura was open and positive about the concept of found poetry from the offset:

> Laura: You've written it, but you've captured my voice. You are adopting my persona.

Laughs.

Martin: Have I captured your voice though?

Laura: Yeah, I think you have actually. Yeah… I can hear myself. I like the one over here [indicates poem 'Adrenaline Rush'] where it had the laughs in.

(Laura & Martin, 2019)

What follows is Laura's reaction to the poem 'Adrenaline Rush' after she had read it during the interview, making this a found poem based on a reaction to a found poem.

The comfort zone (A reaction to the found poem 'Adrenaline rush')

'Adrenaline Rush' - I think that –
not just feeling like you are on the mill,
which I am feeling at the moment.

Come into school,
do the lesson,
judge the work,

put the data in,
go home.

Sighs.

Drink.
Smoke.
Go asleep.

Get up in the morning,
come to school,

laughs.

and just go round –
and just feeling almost like –

it's the addiction actually

to an adrenaline rush and
feeling like you're experiencing
something new and trying

new things and that's what
I think I was meaning when
I was talking about the adrenaline rush –

taking myself out of my comfort zone and
that's what I'm feeling I'm not doing at the moment.

I feel that I'm too scared to take myself
out of the comfort zone,

'cause otherwise is everything else
gonna -

pause

crash?

(Laura, 2019)

Laura (2019) notes that undertaking amateur dramatics allowed her to feel like she was not just "on the mill". This links back to the factory process discussed earlier, as from her viewpoint teaching has become an almost automated factory like experience (Hutchings, 2015; Wright-Mills, 1977). There appears to be something in the process of performing in a production that gave Laura (2019) a chance to feel emancipated. This freedom does not appear to exist in the classroom environment.

Laura (2019) lists a repetitive cycle of life: "[c]ome into school, do the lesson, judge the work". This contrasts greatly to the freer flowing first stanza. Prior to making the poem, Laura's words had a rhythm to them already that suggested a repetitive and monotonous performative work culture. The words contain little joy and they are almost automated with a rhythm that could be compared to a mechanical nature of a machine; part of an examination factory (Hutchings, 2015). The rhythm of Laura's (2019) voice during the interview has been captured in the way the poem is laid out:

Come into school,
do the lesson,
judge the work,

put the data in,
go home.

Sighs.

(Laura, 2019)

The beat for each line can follow a one, two rhythm that ends in a sigh like a machine letting off steam.

Come into school,
do the lesson,
judge the work,

put the data in,
go home.

Sighs.

(Laura, 2019)

Butler-Kisber (2002) discussed the importance of the performative element to poetry and suggested that reading drafts out loud would assist in the tuning of the work. This is a process that supported the creation of this poem in particular. The section of the poem above could almost be repeated indefinitely showing a monotonous working process that churns out the same products perpetually on a production line. Laura (2019) appears not to be a cheerful automaton (Wright-Mills, 1977), but perhaps an unhappy robot. This contrasts greatly to her reflections on the past where she argued she had more creative freedom. The performance measures that Laura and her colleagues are subject to are potentially having damaging effects on their wellbeing. This possibly ties into a narrowing of the curriculum and the wellbeing of the students (Gewirtz, et al., 2019).

The use of 'sighs' and 'laughs' in italics captures Laura's response and feelings in her non-verbal communication. When assembling these poems, I did not originally put in the sighs, pauses and laughs, but when I read the poems back I felt they did not fully capture the moment that I could hear when listening to the interview recording, or read on the full written transcript. It seemed to be lacking Laura's voice, or a truer representation of her at that

moment in time. That is when I realised that part of Laura's voice and message was the sigh, the pause and the laughter. There was often as much said in those moments than in the words themselves, so I decided to keep them in the poems in order to give a greater sense of the participants' voices. During the second interview, when Laura (2019) read the found poems she noted that she liked the use of pause and sigh:

> I can hear myself when I – I like the one over here [indicates a poem] where it had the laughs in. Erm:
>
> [Reads from poem 'Adrenaline Rush']
>
> *Laughs*
>
> You know … that is how I talk. I'm quite aware of it and I like the way you've got the 'laughs' in italics… I think it's a really true reflection.

As I discussed earlier, I felt it was important to capture the voices of the people I was interviewing as accurately as possible. Having the confirmation from Laura has helped me to feel confident that the found poems have a resonance and relevance in terms of how truthfully they capture the voices of the participants.

Coming back to the poem 'The Comfort Zone', in the fourth stanza Laura continues:

Drink.
Smoke.
Go asleep.

(Laura 2019)

This short stanza and the parataxis capture how Laura punctuated her thoughts verbally. The language implies here that life in work bleeds negatively into home life. There seems to be little joy in Laura's words and at this stage in the poem the mechanical rhythm is still there, supported through the way I have structured the poem. This contrasts greatly to the poems reflecting on the past or on creative acts such as performing in a play. The drinking in the poem becomes as mechanical in its rhythm as the workday does. The sleep point continues

with a notion of escape, the end of the day before the cycle resumes. The mechanical rhythm capturing a repetitive cycle continues:

Get up in the morning,
come to school,

(Laura, 2019)

This further demonstrates Laura's (2019) point about "the mill", like she is on a treadmill trying to keep up with the pace and it being a struggle, or a working mill that keeps turning ceaselessly. The found poem captures the life Laura sees herself leading and there is a clear contrast in the life of school and its impact at home compared to the creative life of performing. This is captured in both the words Laura used and the mechanical rhythms that have been made clearer through the structure of the found poem.

The poem then moves into Laura (2019) describing the adrenaline rush of performing, capturing the idea of "experiencing something new and trying new things", whilst taking part in what is a novel act of being part of an ensemble in a theatre production. The rhythm of this section is more varied and contrasts greatly to the life of work; it seems more vibrant. The creative, new experience perhaps makes life worth living (Winnicott, 2010).

Laura (2019) notes "I feel that I'm too scared to take myself out of the comfort zone". The irony here is that based on an analysis of Laura's words, there seems to be little comfort in the zone of teaching. The comfort zone is perhaps the place of performativity or normalisation where a teacher knows they will be seen to be doing the right thing, but there is perhaps little comfort there. Laura stays in that uncomfortable comfort zone, due to a fear of being seen to be different. She has a decreased belief in the value of creativity and her own agency brought on by working in an increasingly performative culture (Ball 2003, 2013b).

The poem ends with how Laura's (2019) fears are driven by a query about whether everything will "crash". When I interviewed Laura, the way she paused before she said "crash" really emphasised the point. It resonated again when I listened to the recording of the interview and it still resonates now as it appears in the found poem through the way the poem is structured. The placing of the word 'crash' after the pause with a gap aims to capture a truer reflection of the voice of Laura. The pause places emphasis on that final word for a reader in the same way that Laura emphasised it when I interviewed her. It is my belief that Laura means she is juggling so much at once that it could all fall apart. However, in a broader sense it could imply a crash as to no longer function in the system. Teachers seem to be juggling many things at once; creativity is far from the forefront of what they do, either in the classroom or at home as I will discuss in relation to other participants later in this chapter.

When considering that English teachers spend a large expense of time asking students to write, I was interested as to whether Laura wrote herself.

I used to write

I used to write quite a
lot of stories, some poetry –
year five/six were probably my
most constructive years.

I had an amazing teacher,
who did loads of creative
writing.
I've got a

book of poetry somewhere.

Some of it I had done in school;
some I'd come home
and done. I used to write
quite a lot of stories,

probably up until the
age of about fourteen,
fifteen and that,

then, err…

pause.

That's a big thing actually
about creativity –
do we become more passive
because we've just got

so much else to look at?

(Laura, 2019)

Laura (2019) notes that her most creative time was her primary school years. Joubert (2010) argues that:

> Young children have a natural ability for using their imagination. They play imaginary games with imaginary friends and take flights of the imagination to far-off places… they are, in fact, the seeds that grow into superb creative abilities. To imagine something is to create a mental image, picture, sound or even a feeling in your mind. Imagination… is principally to do with seeing new or other possibilities. It is this power that enables creative people to offer novel perspectives to ordinary situations… Many children lose this natural power of imagination once they are faced with the formal structures of schooling; most never regain this ability. (p.18)

Around the time of the interviews with the participants, I reflected in my sketchbook on my eighteen-month-old son playing in the living room. He picked up his toy dog, 'Doggie', from the toy box and proceeded to walk over to the other side of the room and place him on a chair. My son then went back to his toy box, picked up his toy cat, 'Jessie', and took her to the chair as well. He then went back to the toy box, picked up a cylinder shaped block and took that to the chair, before going back to the toy box one last time. On his final trip he retrieved a book and took that to the chair as well. My son then attempted to sit himself on the chair that already contained Doggie, Jessie, a cylinder shaped block and a book. After much manoeuvring and scolding of Doggie and Jessie for not letting him sit down, he had one of them on one side of him and one the other. First, he made sure his companions had a 'drink' from the solid cylinder shaped block. My son then put the 'cup' down before proceeding to 'read' his companions a story as he leafed through the upside down book,

pointing at pictures and making happy, inarticulate noises about whatever story he deemed was taking place. This whole act showed a level of imagination and perhaps a level of creativity. I was struck by how this sense of 'play' might one day be lost, most likely when he engaged with the "formal structures of schooling" (Joubert, 2010, p.18). Shakespeare (2006) captures this in the play 'As you like it' when the character of Jaques says:

> … the whining schoolboy, with his satchel
> And shining morning face, creeping like snail
> Unwillingly to school.
> (p.228)

Shakespeare suggests the schoolboy, although with a morning face that shines, will soon be sullied by schooling. Blake (1996) also notes a similar affliction in his poem 'The Schoolboy':

> [T]o go to school in a summer morn, -
> O it drives all joy away!
> Under a cruel eye outworn,
> The little ones spend the day
> In sighing and dismay.
> …
> How can the bird that is born for joy
> Sit in a cage and sing?
> (p.43)

Blake notes how the schoolboy in the morning is full of joy and then the time spent in school creates dismay and stops him from 'singing'. This tangent into the life of my son and his 'friends' and into some voices from literature brings me back to Laura. She says that she has an original book of poetry somewhere that she completed as a child when "she used to write" (Laura, 2019). There are no doubt arguments for Laura stopping writing as she hit her teenage years and other interests taking precedence, but I have to question the broader points about creativity, formal schooling into adulthood and what might restrict people from engaging in creative acts. During the interviews Laura (2019) suggested the following that may shed some light on this query: "when you're talking to other people about it [creativity] you don't *pause* want to sound like you're being a tosser, *laughs*". This point highlights the

concern Laura has about how she might appear to others; this would likely impact on her chance to be creative as she feels the pressure of normalised expectations in secondary education (Ball, 2003; Perryman, et al., 2018). The idea of being a creative practitioner is perhaps not deemed part of being an English teacher. There is the potential for a fear of being othered, or seen as emotional and of the heart, or silly as opposed to being scientific and robust. I use the word 'silly' intentionally and will come back to this point in the next section of this chapter.

4:2 Rachel's story

At the time the interviews took place Rachel was in her second full year of English teaching. She had previously worked in creative industries before retraining as a teacher.

4:2 (i) Rachel and creativity in English

The following found poem was created from the beginning of my first interview with Rachel. She was asked about creativity in her work life.

When it does happen

I would say there isn't
much time for creativity
in work. It's fairly sporadic,
but I do enjoy it when

it does happen and I think
it's quite productive when
it does happen.

There is very little time
for it I think.

(Rachel, 2019)

A key theme that runs through this poem is one of time. "There isn't much time for creativity… [t]here is very little time for it I think" (Rachel, 2019). During the interview process, I noted that Rachel seemed to consider that creativity had to be a grand gesture, or

that there needed to be time to evoke ideas of grander acts of creativity in her lessons as opposed to it being part of her ordinary practice (Jeffrey & Craft, 2010). At the time of the interview, Rachel was in her second year of teaching and joined the profession at a time of great change (Ball, 2013b; Torrance, 2018). Although Rachel teaches English, which is an E-Bac subject, the side-lining of the arts perhaps impacts on creativity in English. Government policy, Ofsted guidelines and a fear of failure against performance measures press notions of the appropriate lesson that will provide evidence of progress that can be measured (Ball, 2013b).

Joubert (2010) notes "[c]reative teaching is an art. One cannot teach teachers didactically how to be creative" (p.21). Teachers need the room to be creative and to see the importance of creativity in themselves. Rachel (2019) enjoys creative acts when she has the time, but if she does not believe she has the time to consider creativity often, then she may never develop her creative practice or an identity as a creative practitioner. Joubert (2010) argues "[c]reative teaching involves risk-taking for teachers who may have to leave the security of the structured lesson behind" (p.22). What I would add is that teachers may feel that they cannot leave the security of the structured lesson behind, or have room or the support to be seen to be taking risks (hooks, 2018). This links back to Laura (2019) when she talked about staying in the comfort zone. What could be seen as security, has now become a straightjacket. If a teacher is not teaching a structured lesson with clear links to examinations, they are perhaps considered dangerous and deviating from what they 'should' be doing. This could have negative implications for creativity in lessons and how teachers think, or believe they can act within the teaching space.

Within the theme of creative teaching there are questions surrounding English as a creative subject. In schools in England in 2020, English is not usually considered part of the arts. Marshall (2010) highlights how nearly a hundred years ago "Edmond Holmes… a school inspector… advocated creative writing as [a] way of liberating the child" (p.120). Arguably, writing in English is itself an art and therefore assessing English is highly problematic if the sense of English as an art is to be retained. English is not listed as being part of the arts in any secondary school in England that I have experienced and this is the case for the majority, if not all of English secondary schools. Over the last hundred years since the 1921 Newbolt Report placed English as a core element of the curriculum, English has moved further away from the notion of being an arts subject. This, coupled with a narrowing of subjects (through the E-Bac) (Ball, 2013b; Torrance, 2018), may potentially have a negative impact on notions of creativity within English. Marshall (2010) notes "in all the recent debates about the arts in education the voice of radical English teachers has been curiously missing… English is no longer considered central to the arts debate. … English does not appear anywhere within the list of arts subjects" (Marshall, 2010, pp. 122-123). This may be due to English being associated with literacy and basic skills. Although English not being linked to the arts is ironic as the English teachers I have interviewed and no doubt the majority of English teachers in England, have a Bachelor of Arts degree. I am not suggesting that having an arts degree would make someone more creative than an individual with a Bachelor of Science degree, but the symbolism behind the word 'arts' has perhaps been lost, or changed within English. This has implications for the individuals that teach English, their chance to engage with creative practices in the classroom and the ability to see the potential for small acts of every day creative practice.

4:2 (ii) Rachel and assessment

As the interview with Rachel progressed, the points in the following poem emerged in relation to examinations and assessment.

Exam

You have to cover what
you have to cover. Therefore,
some elements of
English can feel uncreative.

The relentless practising
similar kinds of questions;
I suppose really, it's the
teaching to the test

elements that we have
to do that are
less creative.

I have issues
with the exam. You

can't do really well
on that exam, unless
you've been taught
how to answer it.

(Rachel, 2019)

The opening of this poem suggests that Rachel (2019) finds the curriculum restrictive: "[y]ou have to cover what you have to cover". Rachel is alluding to the content of the English language course, which she implies is rather dry and formulaic as students rehearse finding language and structural features in texts so they can do it in examinations (Brill, et al., 2018; Torrance, 2018). Rachel's (2019) points have implications of a lack of freedom with no room to creatively explore ideas within the process of teaching English. The "relentless practising" (Rachel, 2019) suggests teachers have to train students to pass examinations by repeating the same processes in a factory line approach (Hutchings, 2015). Boden (2010) argues that it is very easy to restrict, or reduce creativity in the teaching space through three

key points. First, the need in examinations and the classroom for the right or correct answer. Secondly, a lack of willing or ability to analyse the incorrect answer and to explore if a student has some merit to their response or a new way of seeing things. Finally, an expression of contempt or lack of patience for the student that came up with the incorrect, or unexpected response. There is little joy emerging from Rachel's (2019) words captured in the poem, which links to Boden's (2010) point about restrictions to creativity, as Rachel spends a lot of time teaching students to search for the correct answer that will meet the required measurable points in an examination. This might result in novel responses or approaches being viewed as incorrect. A reduction in creativity could then follow, possibly nullifying it completely for both students and their teachers. A creative approach to teaching does not mean that pupils will not be able to pass an examination, but in the collective mind-set of teachers there might be a concern about trying to do something creative or novel for fear it will produce ideas that do not fit a set examination standard. Rachel (2019) says that she has "issues with the exam" as she explains that it is not possible to perform highly on the English examination if it has not been practised. Students do not just need a good knowledge of English language to pass this examination; they also require knowledge of how to access the examination itself (Dymoke, 2001; Marsh, 2017). Rachel (2019) believes a knowledgeable individual could not sit this examination and perform at the highest level without practising it first. For example, one of the examination questions requires students to discuss inference in relation to a selected source; at no point in the question itself does it tell students they should infer. The question below (from June 2018) available on AQA's (2020a) website follows an extract from a novel:

> How does the writer use language here to convey Mr Fisher's views on books and stories of the past?
> You could include the writer's choice of:
> - words and phrases
> - language features and techniques
> - sentence forms

Rachel's (2019) point pertains to the assessment objectives set out by AQA (2019) for this examination that require students to "identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas" (AQA, 2019). Some students might well look for implicit information as a matter of course, but some might not. This example, is one of many facets of the English examinations that guide teachers to teach to the test in order to ensure students understand the examinations and can pass them at a grade in line with their 'flight path' (Torrance, 2018). This could restrict the space in which teachers can be creative or deviate. Instead, teachers spend a lot of lesson time practising examination style questions with their classes. They have bought into the belief that performative approaches are important. Whether this is through attrition or a performance in itself, it leads to limited room to embrace an unexpected answer in lessons and nurture it. There seems to be limited room for creativity, freedom and a sense of agency.

When asked about how students are assessed, Rachel (2019) made points that allowed for the creation of the following poem.

Mark scheme

I have a few students who
write absolutely beautifully
and the mark scheme makes
me...

pause

tell them they have to
change the way that
they write in order to
fit the mark scheme fully.

I've got two boys who
write very, very nicely;
naturally, like amazingly,
like you know when you think

you would struggle to

write like that and yet
you have to go to them and
say “you must

use a variety of punctuation” -
which can be quite restrictive.

In the positive introduction to this poem, Rachel (2019) notes that she has students who write “beautifully”. This suggests something special, or stands out as being a thing to admire. The pause was important in this poem as Rachel reflected on the examination’s mark scheme and its impact. Rachel pauses after saying “the mark scheme makes me…” (Rachel, 2019). The way Rachel trails off into a pause means that she cannot quite articulate the power of the mark scheme, but it is there. It is like Rachel cannot think outside of the guidelines of the mark scheme, or if she does there is a fear she will be considered ‘mad’, or beyond reason within the field of judgement deployed (Ball, 2003, 2013b; Foucault, 2009a; Gielen, 2013). The pause then led to what I believe is a lament when Rachel (2019) says, “tell them they have to change the way that they write in order to fit the mark scheme fully”. The top end of the mark scheme for the creative writing section that Rachel is alluding to is from AQA (2020b):

Content

- Communication is convincing and compelling
- Tone, style and register are assuredly matched to purpose and audience
- Extensive and ambitious vocabulary with sustained crafting of linguistic devices

Organisation

- Varied and inventive use of structural features
- Writing is compelling, incorporating a range of convincing and complex ideas
- Fluently linked paragraphs with seamlessly integrated discourse markers

Rachel suggests that the mark scheme is restrictive, as students have to learn to address each bullet point in order to ensure they pass the examination. To support this, teachers come up with various mnemonics for students to learn in order to create a method that helps students to tick off the bullet points (Gilbert, 2012). Eisner (1985) argues that “[p]roblems that do not lend themselves to measurement or to scientific solutions have been considered intellectually

ill-conceived" (p.17). This means that human beings need to change to fit the examination systems, otherwise they cannot be measured against the set criteria, which in turn causes teachers to be less creative in their approach (Marshall, 2010). Rachel (2019) notes students that write 'naturally' have to sometimes change in order to fit in with the examination, even though she says that she herself "would struggle to write like that". There is a respect from Rachel for the students' talents in writing. She then notes how the mark scheme demands she forces the students to comply with the assessment criteria otherwise they will not attain higher marks; "you must use a variety of punctuation" (Rachel, 2019). Marshall (2010) argues creativity is perhaps not always valued in the UK and that selected politicians and writers have highlighted how perceived academic standards must be paramount over the development of young people; grammar is more important than creative writing. Marshall (2010) notes that these perceptions are:

> [W]idely held and frequently promulgated, though often less explicitly, through UK papers such as The Daily Mail, or The Telegraph, have made any discussion about creativity much harder. The emotive edge that this kind of coverage lends discussion to means that anyone who comments on the imaginative qualities of a piece of child's writing, without first mentioning the spelling mistakes and punctuation errors, is guilty of wilful neglect bordering on public disorder. (p.117)

This ties back to Rachel's points about having to challenge students' own style and replace it with set, regulated sentences. The students are changed by this system, but it is Rachel that is also moulded in the process as she internalises what she believes is expected of the students when they sit an examination and therefore restricts novel approaches in her lessons.

4:2 (iii) Rachel and creativity: no place for little acts of creativity

Earlier I noted Rachel's lack of what I interpreted as appreciation of the potential importance of little c creativity (Craft, 2010). Our meeting was just before Christmas and Rachel opted to give students a (what some teachers may call) 'fun' lesson. She undertook some creative writing with them where students had to pick a person, an item, a location and an action.

These points all then came together in a story that Rachel wrote on the white board collaboratively with the students. The work would not require marking and it would not count towards anything for an examination. The following poem emerged.

A silly lesson

I have just written
a story on the board,
about Mr Smith killing
Santa with a bazooka.

I just did a silly lesson
with year 7.

It was a silly lesson.

(Rachel, 2019)

This poem stands out to me as an example of how creativity in lessons might be viewed by Rachel and possibly how it is considered by the system as a whole. Creativity, through a collaborative approach was something that could be undertaken in a lesson just before Christmas as students were winding down to the end of term. Rachel (2019) was dismissive of the lesson: "[i]t was a silly lesson". I have no doubt that the content was a little 'silly'. Mr Smith is a well-known teacher in the school and the students no doubt enjoyed using him as a means to inflict death and destruction upon Santa Claus with a large rocket-propelled explosive device. The poem and the narrative it tells reminds me of the place of collaborative practice in English secondary schools, which is increasingly considered a bit of fun or a frivolous indulgence (hooks, 2018). It could be questioned whether the creative process in Rachel's lesson was silly or if rather if it allowed the students and Rachel to engage in something beyond writing for assessment. The students wrote an original story in collaboration with each other and the teacher. They wanted to take part in the learning and from what Rachel said, they seemed to have enjoyed the process. The purpose of the lesson was seemingly to allow the students to have a 'fun' at the end of the term before Christmas,

but it also engaged them in creative writing. Ironically, this 'silly lesson' might actually benefit them in an examination. I am drawn to the words of Ron Scapp from a discussion he had with his colleague bell hooks (2018) when he notes that enjoyment is often seen as not being proper in terms of learning:

> Colleagues say to me, 'Your students seem to be enjoying themselves, they seem to be laughing whenever I walk by, you seem to be having a good time'. And the implication is that you're a good joke-teller, you're a good performer, but no serious teaching is happening. Pleasure in the classroom is feared. If there is laughter, a reciprocal ex-change may be taking place. You're laughing, the students are laughing, and someone walks by, looks in and says 'okay, you're able to make them laugh. But so what? Anyone can entertain'. They can take this attitude because the idea of reciprocity, or respect, is not ever assumed. It is not assumed that your ideas can be entertaining, moving. To prove your academic seriousness, students should be almost dead, quiet, asleep, not up, excited, and buzzing, lingering around the classroom. (hooks, 2018, p.145)

The points noted above link in with Rachel's (2019) use of 'silly' to judge her lesson, which also compliments Laura's (2019) 'little' and 'just' when talking about creative work; it is out of the appropriate field of judgement (Ball, 2013b). Rachel and Laura are teachers who are knowledgeable and care about English and their students, but appear to be dismissive of acts of creativity in contemporary practice and possibly reciprocity too in their teaching. There is a fear that they will be perceived as not doing what is expected or acceptable. Eisner (1985) suggests "[t]o keep one's job in a complex system, one must do what will look good, what is considered up to date, and what will be regarded as acceptable" (p.16). There is perhaps a fear of what outsiders think of the teaching in a classroom space. There is an anxiety of being creative in English lessons, for fear that it will be considered unacceptable, silly or 'mad' (Foucault, 2009a) and not in fitting with a performance driven culture (Ball, 2003). The irony in all of this is that students could benefit both personally and in terms of their examination preparation through engaging in lessons that are freer, or more creative and so to could the teachers (Robinson, 2009; Winnicott, 2010).

Whilst I was in the process of conducting the interviews with the participants, I was working on a revision session for a year 11 English literature group. I had planned to revise the plot of the novel 'Frankenstein' with key quotations to prepare students for their written examination. In the examination, students will have approximately forty-five minutes to answer a question on 'Frankenstein' (without having the text in the examination with them). I had originally intended to use a school approved worksheet that students would fill in with the key plot points and a quotation from the text for each point. The students entered the class and looked worn out after many revision lessons across the curriculum that would have involved completing worksheets and looking at PowerPoints. I looked at them as they took their seats. I had the worksheets in my hand. I had a different idea, but did not enact it and instead handed out the worksheets. I noted in my sketchbook later that Dylan deflated into his desk and Sophie let out a groan like a wounded animal. I told them that they needed to write out the key plot points of 'Frankenstein' and find quotations for each point. For those categorised on the school's system as the most able, there were a list of contextual factors on the board for them to add to their notes as well. A few picked up their pens, whilst others just looked worn out.

The theatre director Peter Brook (1995) tells a story about when he was asked to deliver a lecture on directing Shakespeare. He was presented with a standard lecture hall where he was to stand at the 'front' of the space and talk to the audience. Brook (1995) says that he found himself staring into what he describes as an abyss of the darkened audience in the auditorium. The lecture was not working, as he felt he could not get through to his audience as he was used to working with actors in closer proximity in a more collaborative environment. Therefore, he stopped his lecture and asked the event organisers to find him another space. The organisers quickly looked around and found him a small room where he crammed his

audience in. Brook noted that he could now converse with the audience in a way that he speaks to his actors when directing; he could look them in the eye and had found a space that worked in terms of engagement, discussion and collaboration. This is similar to what I did in my 'Frankenstein' lesson. I noted in my sketchbook that I said, "right, on your feet we're off to find another space" (Martin, 2019). The students looked uncomfortable, as they had to leave the safety of their desks and chairs. This reminds me of Laura when she talks about staying in a comfort zone (Laura, 2019). Eventually, my year 11 class and I headed off down the corridor and found a room with hardly any desks. We formed a circle and undertook a warm up exercise involving hands on the floor in a circle, using rhythm and movement to come together in a team experience (Boal, 1993). There were smiles and some laughter. All the while I was aware that I was not doing what I was 'supposed to'. I could be accused of not doing English 'properly' at a desk, or reprimanded for not being in the designated room by a member of the school's senior leadership team, or my line manager. I then put students into groups of approximately four and asked them to create six still images that represented key moments from 'Frankenstein'. Students engaged. They laughed. They recapped the plot of the text. They then added quotations to their images that they would have to say aloud as they showed the rest of the class each image that the quotation linked to.

The door opened and in walked a member of the leadership team. After the event, I noted in my sketchbook that a chill ran down my spine. I felt nervous. "Mr Matthews, I've been looking for your class. What are you doing?" I was asked. My response was short "revising 'Frankenstein' " (Martin, 2019). My senior colleague did not seem convinced as they passed on the message to the student they were looking for before heading back off through the door, lingering for a moment, before leaving. Eisner's (1985) words resonate again: "[t]o keep one's job in a complex system, one must do what will look good, what is considered up to

date, and what will be regarded as acceptable" (p.16). I have not yet been sacked, but I know if I took an English class out of the set classroom every lesson then questions about whether I was teaching the class English 'properly' could be asked. Notions of teaching a class 'properly' in the school in which I work, likely stems from a concept of what someone thinks Ofsted want and what expected norms of English teaching are. Foucault (2009a) and Ball (2013a) highlight that it becomes almost impossible to think outside of normalised practices without running the risk of being seen as 'mad'. Ironically, if it had been a GCSE drama class then my approach to the lesson would have been deemed as being fully appropriate within a performance culture. I should also note that for all I know the senior staff member liked what I was doing, but if that individual did like it, it was not said or discussed. My fear arises from my own integration with a system that questions difference and perceived deviation. I am complicit in this system, as are all staff members in my school including the four participants in this study as they all maintain a job within that structure (Eisner, 1985). My complicity in normalised practices has perhaps changed who I am as a teacher and who I am as a person (Ball, 2003) as I am reluctant to try an approach that deviates from normalised English classroom practice very often.

Afterwards, the class and I returned to our timetabled classroom and the students filled in the worksheet on 'Frankenstein' for evidence in their books. The practical exercise we completed was not the most creative adventure ever, but it worked at that moment. Most importantly of all I noted "would an NQT [Newly Qualified Teacher] be brave enough to try this either on a whim or even planning it in advance?" (Martin, 2019). I am an experienced teacher at the top of the pay scale and with that, perhaps, comes some leeway to try something different, have a sense of agency as a professional and 'get away with it'. From this analysis it seems that Rachel (2019), as a newer member of the teaching profession, does

not have the same freedom, but rather a fear of freedom (Freire, 1996). According to Ball, Maguire, Braun and Hoskins (2011) "most junior and newly qualified teachers… exhibit 'policy dependency' and high levels of compliance most of the time. They are looking for guidance and direction rather than attempting any creativity" (p. 632). As a more senior teacher, I perhaps have the confidence to not feel totally bound by compliance to policy, indeed the lesson I undertook was perhaps a 'silly lesson' that could be perceived as not being serious, or appropriate as an English lesson in the performative culture in which I operate.

4:2 (iv) Rachel and time

The 'Silly Lesson' poem was followed by ideas that Rachel discussed that focussed on reasons why creativity may not be an easy concept to engage with in the English classroom.

This, this and this

Every time you think you would
like some time to think about how
you would do something in a
more interesting way –

you're sort of beaten down by the stuff
you have to do beforehand – before
you can have time to think
about things in an interesting way.

Thinking takes time doesn't it?
In order to be creative you need to
have time to think.

Pause.

I mean sometimes you can have a great idea
in a moment,
but it often requires your head space to be fairly
– in a certain place –

that sounds really ridiculous –

but you need to have some sort of

clarity in your head space -
if you're constantly thinking

I've got to do this,
I've got to do that for this person,
I've got to do this for that person,

this, this and this –

I'm behind on that,
that and that –

how can you then think
"oh I'm going to do something -
  oh whilst juggling all these balls in the air,
  I'm also going to be able to
  do something completely imaginative".

(Rachel, 2019)

This poem captures Rachel's feelings and thoughts on what restricts her approaching English in a more creative way. In the second stanza Rachel (2019) discusses being "beaten down", by the things she sees as having to do before she can consider creativity. There are perhaps two points to consider here. First, the restrictions that are there and secondly those that Rachel places on herself based on pressures from a performative culture. There will be things that she sees as barriers such as data driven targets for students, the need to present work in books in a certain way, to ensure that students have a starter task as soon as they enter the room or to demonstrate progress against targets in each lesson. Indeed, hooks (2018) discusses how when she started teaching she would feel a sense of panic or catastrophe if she deviated from her lesson plan. She notes that this sense of crisis stems from a fear that material will not be covered and a performative culture may question the methods taken. I can see hooks' (2018) thoughts echoed in Rachel's reflections. When Rachel (2019) notes being "beaten down" it has implications of brutality and raises ideas of a reduction in status as a professional. This supports the moulding of identity by the perceived examination, observation and measurement processes. For the most part, Rachel is not physically under

observation or scrutiny. There is usually not someone looking at her lessons on a daily basis and her students' books are not checked by a more senior teacher every lesson. Foucault's (1991) panopticon is an apt metaphor for performative measures in schools as the tower becomes the data systems implemented in schools and performance management processes that normalise teacher behaviours through the threat of being watched. For Rachel, there is the pressure of conformity and a fear of who might be watching, even if no one is at that moment in time. I will come back to this point later. The fear of being judged restricts her ability to be "imaginative" (Rachel, 2019) and diminishes a sense of agency.

In the latter stages of the poem Rachel (2019) says "I've got to do this, I've got to do that for this person, I've got to do this for that person". The use of the words 'this' and 'that' are interesting as they are nonspecific and vague. The vagueness demonstrates a disconnect with the tasks that Rachel is alluding to; those tasks likely being various administrative or bureaucratic responsibilities that need completing before she can engage students in English, or even consider a creative approach. Rachel (2019) follows with "this, this and this", further confirming a list of nonspecific tasks that restrict notions of freedom that are perpetuated further through the metaphor of "juggling all these balls in the air". There appear to be barriers in Rachel's way that stop her from being creative and perhaps change how she would have taught English or engaged with creative practices herself. Some of these restrictions are self-imposed, as Rachel (2019) seems to still see creativity as a large gesture when she notes she needs to do all the different jobs she has before she does something "completely imaginative". There seems to be little room for every day acts of creativity in Rachel's working life, as performance measures and discursive practices take precedence (Ball, 2013a; Craft, 2010).

4:2 (v) Rachel and data and assessment

The multitude of tasks that Rachel feels that she has to complete, include inputting and responding to data and completing admin linked to student targets. Ideas about the prominence of data and assessment overseeing teaching and potentially restricting creativity in the process were captured in the following poem.

Add this up

Deal with this,
put this on this system,
put this on that system,
add this up -

pause

-write all over that in red -

laughs.

-write all over this in red.
Encourage pupils to achieve this.
Mark what pupils need in order to achieve this.
Find the right thing for the pupils to achieve this.

Find the next thing –
you know –
it's kind of –

I don't know.

(Rachel, 2019)

In the first stanza there is a wonderful repetition from Rachel (2019) with a slight differentiation – "put this on this system, put this on that system". A lot of Rachel's job is ensuring that she records pupil progress on the correct systems so that it can be measured. The systems in the poem are unnamed and have an image of blandness due to the use of 'this' and 'that'. There is no obvious connection for Rachel (2019) to the measuring systems, other than they are there to be fed data that supports the measuring of students and Rachel herself (Ball, 2013a, 2015; Gielen, 2013; Hutchings, 2015; Torrance, 2018). A large proportion of

Rachel's job is to measure and record pupil progress (Torrance, 2018). Assumptions in contemporary teaching in English have developed regarding a conviction that measurement of 'educational payoff' is the only thing that has any importance. This payoff continues to exhibit itself in a valuation structure that assesses teachers solely on the foundation of their students' measured accomplishments (Ball, 2003, 2013a; Eisner, 1985; Perryman, et al., 2018). These evaluation structures can stem from the systems that Rachel is inputting data into, as the information she inputs regarding students acts as part of her yearly appraisal process. The poem above highlights the on-going need to feed a system of appraisal. The panopticon (Foucault, 1991) is relevant again as Rachel (2019) feels pressured to ensure her students' books look correct in the event of a 'book check'; "write all over that in red". In the poem, this is followed by a laugh from Rachel. The laugh is important as she then follows it with "write all over this in red" (Rachel, 2019). The laughter represents a realisation of the ridiculousness of the activity and maybe that she is complicit in this normalised process of what students' books should look like (Ball, 2003, 2013b). Teachers are judged on where they write comments in students' books, how they write them and in some cases whether they have used a certain colour of ink. The world of teaching moves into the hyperreal as Rachel is also judged on the data that is inputted into a system and how that correlates with how work in books is evidenced. This is all performative in its nature, as teachers ensure that the books look 'right' presenting an image of learning that may or may not actually be taking place, as the data systems will dictate a teacher's competence in the end (Ball & Olmedo, 2013; Baudrillard, 1997; Page, 2017). Rachel will partly write feedback comments to support students and partly to ensure that if anyone looks at the books then there is an appearance of feedback and teacher and student engagement. There is little consideration for the holistic picture of how written feedback can be part of a broader, democratic dialogue with students

in classrooms. Rachel is lost somewhere between the panopticon's gaze and the hyperreal world of education.

The laughter in the poem also comes from Rachel's (2019) acknowledgement of her repetition of "this" and "that" from the data to the marking, which had its own kind of poetic rhythm before it was put into a found poem. The language used again demonstrates a distance from the material as it is almost soulless as it is non-specific and vague. Rachel (2019) then follows on with "[e]ncourage pupils to achieve this. Mark what pupils need in order to achieve this. Find the right thing for the pupils to achieve this". The repetition of 'this' is again important as it demonstrates a further distance from the subject content of English and an engagement with a non-specific 'this'. This vague, performative process seems to play a large part in Rachel's day, all in order for students to achieve their target grades, or to hold Rachel accountable when they do not (Ball, 2013b; Torrance, 2018).

The poem ends with a stanza of short line length and a single standalone line – "you know – it's kind of -" (Rachel, 2019), followed by a line break and then "I don't know" (Rachel, 2019). This closing stage of the poem captures the uncertainty and disconnect that Rachel seemed to be expressing at the moment we spoke. There seemed to be an uncertainty of purpose in Rachel driven by an obligation to follow the requirements of performance and compliance and the teaching of norms. Teachers guide students to follow 'norms' and rules of the school. Alongside this, teachers are also fixed into designated 'norms' or conformity requirements. If teachers are not going to follow the designated paths, they must appear to be through inputting data into systems and ensuring students' books meet expectations of a performance culture (Page, 2017). Regimes of audit, data analysis and general performativity support compliance (Apple, 2005; Ball 2013a; Page, 2017; White 2010). Rachel complies

with school systems and is therefore complicit with them. Eisner (1985) argues that "[f]or teachers, the buy-in to the technical/business orientation to schooling is, I believe, another form of self-preservation" (p.17). At the end of the school year, Rachel will need to justify students' grades and will require data and other forms of evidence in order to pass her performance management which ties into her pay progression and presents her value in the system (Ball, 2015). Self-preservation does not appear to be fulfilling for Rachel and I believe does not allow her to teach English to students as creatively as she might otherwise do.

4:2 (vi) Rachel and messing about

After the first meeting with Rachel, I put together found poems deriving from the first meeting's transcript and then gave them to her before I interviewed her the second time. The following found poem is Rachel's reaction to the found poem 'Silly Lesson'.

Are we messing around?

I think there's a pressure to do things
that are serious as well aren't there?
And pressure to –

are we talking about inference?
Are we talking about this?
Are we talking about that?

Is this serious enough?
Are we messing around?

Are we learning anything?

(Rachel, 2019)

A key word that comes out of this poem is 'serious'. Rachel's concerns pertain to the notion that learning must be serious, or perhaps deemed to be. There is no time for "messing around" (Rachel, 2019). Creative acts cannot be measured easily and therefore can be categorised as not being serious, as opposed to an examination that can be assessed. Ideas of

seriousness in education link to hooks (2018) when she argues: "[e]xcitement in higher education was viewed as potentially disruptive of the atmosphere of seriousness assumed to be essential to the learning progress" (p.7). While I agree that the lesson summed up in the poem 'Silly Lesson' was a bit silly as it involved a teacher attacking Santa with the use of military hardware, the process that the students went through was perhaps not so 'silly'. Seriousness is assumed by many individuals to be essential to the learning process (hooks, 2018). Rachel (2019) seems to be under the impression that this is the case, which is a contrast to Laura (2019) who discussed how when she was in the early stages of her career, she often utilised creative acts. The 'Silly Lesson' was perhaps a way for students (and Rachel) to see the English space in a creative, fresh way and to approach things a little differently (Cropley & Cropley, 2008; Goleman, et al., 1993). Rachel is understandably concerned about making sure that students have covered all of the features of the curriculum that they need to learn in order to pass an examination (Torrance, 2018), as this is what Rachel is held to account on (Ball, 2013b). Although, Rachel could perhaps be 'silly' (or more creative) with some of the learning throughout the school year without affecting results (hooks, 2018). Boden (1994) argues that creativity can come from restrictions. This does not seem to be the case for Rachel. It is the pressures of performativity (Ball, 2003, 2013b) that drive Rachel's approach to teaching and restrict both her individual creativity and, in turn, creativity in her lessons.

4:2 (vii) Rachel and her creative self

The interview moved to more general conversations regarding how Rachel saw herself in relation to creativity. This part of the interview blurred the lines between work and home life.

Time to think

I'd say that I've not really had time
to think about whether or not
I was a creative person, or anything
related to my creativity.

It's not a priority, ever.
Can never be prioritised really
because there's too much other
stuff that needs to get done

before you'd get to that point.

(Rachel, 2019)

The theme of time (or lack of) persists in the poetry that emerged from the interviews with Rachel (2019), as he notes a lack of time to consider creativity and that "there's too much other stuff that needs to get done". Rachel notes non-specific barriers to creativity and does not see room for small acts of creativity (Craft, 2010), or consider that she has space to deviate, make novel connections, or use innovative ideas. This is similar to Laura (2019) feeling like she is "on the mill", as it seems that life and all its trappings get in the way of creative acts.

During our second meeting, Rachel and I discussed the place of creativity in her life as a whole.

Being creative

It feels frivolous in the
balance of my life.
Partly because I have to
deal with other stuff that is

required for the working part of my life.
And then you know
–various other things –
anything,

anything directly related to me is

quite far down the list –

so me being creative is even further down the list –

like having a bath

laughs.

(Rachel, 2019)

Rachel discusses the demanding nature of work life, which then bleeds into her personal life. The structure of this poem demonstrates how Rachel (2019) sees her creativity as an event that would be the bottom of a very long list; it is something that would need time and is not part of daily practice and is not a priority. Winnicott (2010) argues that creativity is what makes life worth living, but Rachel highlights how busy life is and does not seem to acknowledge the potential for little c creative acts within the tasks she completes daily in both her work life and personal life (Craft, 2010). The consequence is that she sees creativity

in her classroom as an indulgence; it is not essential as it cannot be measured and therefore is set aside (Eisner, 1985; Gielen, 2013). Equally, this has perhaps found its way into her life as a whole as she does not overtly engage with creative acts away from work. Having previously worked in creative industries this would seem like shift for Rachel; she has perhaps been changed by the practices that underpin being a teacher (Ball, 2003).

Another link between Laura and Rachel comes through the next poem.

Treadmill

Life can feel quite treadmill –
like so that you're constantly just getting through –

you're trying to get through the day;
you know you're trying to get through -

get the things done that need to be done.

(Rachel, 2019)

The revolving nature of a treadmill ties in with ideas of factory lines rolling off the same products repeatedly (Hutchings, 2015). This monotonous process is caught up in the language of the poem above giving a robotic depiction of life as a teacher. Equally, a treadmill is an apt metaphor for teaching as an individual runs on a treadmill, but does not actually move forward or backwards but stays in the same place whilst exerting energy. She also does not need to encounter unexpected individuals and negotiate obstacles or dogs on leads which requires innovative thinking and adaption to the path trodden. This becomes an analogy for life in a performative culture in schools in England that is increasingly lonely, isolated with an encouragement to focus solely on one's own progress in a data-driven culture. Likewise, Laura (2019) noted that sometimes it can feel like she is "on the mill". Laura may have been discussing a working mill that spins, or she was abbreviating treadmill,

but either way without being aware of what the other one had said, the two participants had a similar point to make about the revolving, monotonous cycle of teaching.

As the conversation about Rachel's personal creativity progressed, I found again that she considers small, every day acts of creativity to not be as significant as renowned creative acts (Craft, 2010).

Measure up

When you've

read an awful lot of great literature or you've
read an awful lot of great stuff and

seen a lot of great art and
seen a lot of amazing people being amazingly creative –

I think then to be moderately creative
just doesn't seem to measure up.

(Rachel, 2019)

The latter part of the poem stands out to me: "I think then to be moderately creative just doesn't seem to measure up" (Rachel, 2019). Many individuals do not see themselves as being creative, because they measure their capabilities against those few creative masterminds from the past and present (Joubert, 2010). This implies that Rachel could only truly value creativity if it fitted with Boden's (1994) discussions of historical-creativity where an individual has an idea that no one else in the history of human beings has had before, or Big C creativity that ties in with renowned acts of creative work. According to Joubert (2010) comparing one's self to a master of creative craft could lead an individual to consider that they are not overtly creative. Rachel (2019) suggests that to be moderately creative does not measure up and perhaps leads her to consider herself to not be creative, or value the possible little c creative work that could take place in a classroom (Craft, 2010). This ties in with Laura's (2019) comments where she belittled her creative acts through the use of 'little'

and ‘just’. There seems to be a sense of self-deprecation when the participants reflect on their own creativity (Freire, 1996). I will come back to this idea when I discuss Daniel’s story next.

4:3 Daniel’s story

At the time the interviews took place, Daniel had been teaching English for four years. He spent approximately a decade after completing his English degree working in a different public sector role before retraining as a teacher.

4:3 (i) Daniel and creativity in English: no room to fail

The first poem from Daniel discusses a conflict he has regarding creativity in English.

A conflict

I think it’s really difficult
when you say to a
student “okay, we need
a creative idea here”.

I have a conflict then –
do I give them the
creative idea – in which
case then they’re not

being creative; or
do I allow them to
be creative? And, realistically
if we’re using the high

definition of the word
‘creative’, they’re gonna
fail more times than
succeed. Most writers,
most musicians will
fail in their creativity
more times than they
succeed.

(Daniel, 2019)

Students have to write responses in the GCSE English Language examination that are described as creative, narrative or descriptive writing (AQA 2020a). Daniel (2019) argues that if he gives the students the creative idea for their writing then he is perhaps stopping them from being creative themselves. Daniel (2019) goes on to highlight a further problem for teachers when promoting creativity: "do I allow them to be creative? … they're gonna fail more times than they succeed". The notion of failure restricting creativity seems to be an issue all of the participants face. They cannot allow students to truly be creative and act with autonomy, due to fear of failure in an examination. Rachel (2019) noted earlier that she had to tell students who write well to change the way they write so that they fit in with a mark scheme. Equally, Daniel (2019) suggests that if he does not tell students what to write then they might fail. Joubert (2010) highlights that "if failure is not allowed, children will tend to play it safe and never take creative risks" (p.21). If students are predominantly trained to pass examinations, then they may never develop a fully freely creative approach to other aspects of their lives. This also restricts teachers' own chances for creative practices centred in a sense of agency, as students' progress is constantly measured throughout the year; any dips in the 'flight path' have to be justified as the teachers' abilities are questioned in this performative process (Ball, 2013b; Perryman, et al., 2011; Perryman, et al., 2018; Torrance, 2018). Teachers will then narrow their pedagogy so that they do not take creative risks; there is a complete intolerance of failure (Cameron, 2011). Examination processes equally do not encourage students or teachers to take creative risks that may be perceived as differing from ideas set out by assessment criteria. If teachers (like their students) are not allowed to fail sometimes then they may not take creative risks, which could have supported the development of their pedagogy and give a greater sense of autonomy that could give a greater sense of wellbeing (Winnicott, 2010).

The poem finishes with Daniel noting that most writers and musicians will "fail more times than they succeed" (Daniel, 2019). Most well-known writers and musicians will not have become successful with their first attempt at writing a story or a song. If students are not allowed to fail, then this restricts creativity as a whole and reduces the relevance of small, everyday acts of creativity in the lives of young people and the adults they will become (Craft, 2010; Joubert, 2010; Winnicott, 2010). There are no doubt musicians out there who are creatively failing each day, from the seasoned number one selling artist to the primary school student strumming an out of tune acoustic guitar that once belonged to their Uncle Colin. By failure, I mean making mistakes and errors. If this is not allowed, then it could restrict all levels of creativity from the big to the small. New ways of being or thinking can often come from errors (Joubert, 2010; Robinson, 2009) or taking a different course of action from the one set out (Goleman, et al., 1993).

The school in which I am conducting this research requires 'data drops' on a regular basis, as do most secondary schools in England. A 'data-drop' is where teachers have to record the attainment of their students at that given time. Numerous 'data drops' take place throughout a school year to allow tracking and measuring of progress to take place. Students must be seen to be 'on track' towards their target grade on their 'flight path'; there is a demand to see constant progress (Torrance, 2018). In this culture it is not in the interest of Daniel or any of his colleagues to allow under achievement against set targets to persist, even if a student is doing something interesting in terms of growth and development as an artist or creative individual. Failure would need to be addressed and the practice that caused that failure changed so that it fits with the examination's expectations linked to a student's 'flight path'. This is particularly restrictive to creative writing in English as the system demands that there is no image of failure in a teacher's data record of student progress. The result of this is that

teachers like Daniel will likely tell his students the sort of ideas they should have when writing creative work and mould their writing to fit the examinations' mark scheme to ensure they are 'on track' when the 'data-drops' take place (Torrance, 2018). This will, in turn, affect the way Daniel approaches his lessons and acts as a creative individual himself, as he will be fearful of a dip in attainment against data set targets. This could have a profound effect on his students as Joubert (2010) highlights that "[s]ome people are only creative once they recover from their school education, because their talents were unrecognized at that time" (p.24). I believe that talents are often recognised, but ignored by teachers through necessity as Rachel (2019) highlighted in an earlier poem when she discussed how she had two boys who wrote very well. She felt she had to tell them to change how they write and guide them to use a set way to punctuate otherwise they will not fit the marking requirements of the examination (Rachel, 2019). The performative nature of the world in which these teachers work means they are restricting their own creative practices as well as that of their students.

4:3 (ii) Daniel and generic pop music: restrictions to creativity

Daniel's use of musicians and music to make his point extended further as our conversations progressed.

Generic pop

I don't listen to pop music
anymore – generic pop music
has got an element of creativity
far beyond anything I could achieve.

But every so often we identify
something as being
beyond the norm.
The Beatles – they started

off as a typical pop band
and were very successful,

but as they got bigger
they became more creative

by taking from other cultures
and other soundscapes.
I think as teachers we
try to get our students

to be creative. Do we
actually see anything
truly creative?

I'm not sure.

(Daniel, 2019)

It is interesting that Daniel (2019) discusses arts other than writing when reflecting on creativity. This is representative that creativity crosses many disciplines, but could also link back to notions that creativity is separate to secondary school English (Marshall 2010). By generic pop, Daniel means popular music that might be found in the music charts and mainly aimed at a young, mainstream market. This type of music usually follows a recipe that is guaranteed to sell records. Beall (2009) highlights how music tracks are usually picked for release by whether they will work on radio. Each radio station follows a very specific format that is designed to work for the elected audiences. This means that songwriters and producers need to follow the rules of popular music in order to have records played on the radio and sell plenty of copies. This entails ensuring pop songs are of a set length and sit within the expected format for the genre. Most pop songs usually range between two to four minutes in length and 177 to 122 beats per minute written in a major key (usually C) following an intro, verse, chorus, verse, chorus format (Lindvall, 2011). Rules of pop music rarely sit well with creative people, but they have to stick to the structure set out in the expectations of a good pop song in order to be successful (Beall, 2009). Daniel (2019) argues that The Beatles started life as a traditional pop band with a teenage fan base and that "as they got bigger they became more creative by taking from other cultures and other soundscapes". He discusses

how the Beatles started to branch out from a more generic form of popular music that resulted in pushing the boundaries of music and recording technologies. Daniel (2019) goes on to say "I think as teachers we try to get our students to be creative. Do we actually see anything truly creative? I'm not sure". Teachers of English have a job to do and that is to try to get their students to write creatively. However, teachers also have a stake in students passing the examination, which becomes the central purpose of their role in a performative culture. Like Rachel (2019), Daniel seems to be focussing on creativity that is recognised and celebrated, rather than small acts of individual creativity (Boden, 1994; Craft, 2010). The pop music charts become an analogy for the performative examination culture in schools as teachers ensure that students are creative, but within a set parameter that will allow students to pass the examination. Pop music is designed to make money and education is increasingly tied to economic measures (Apple, 2005; Ball, 2013b). Daniel's (2019) discussion of The Beatles is important as he argues they had space to branch out and try new things; students sitting English examinations in English secondary schools and their teachers do not seem to have the chance to take risks, or try something different. This provokes questions of how creative the creative writing section of the English examination actually is and how creative the English teachers can be when teaching it.

4:3 (iii) Daniel and assessment: the gatekeepers of creativity

Following on from Daniel's points about generic pop music, I posed a question about whether (figuratively speaking) we are producing students who create generic pop music.

Are we creating students who are creating generic pop music?

Yeah. That will hit the top end of the mark scheme, or get into the top ten, or the top forty because it ticks all of the boxes. It's like:

verse,
chorus,
verse,
chorus,

bridge;
key change.
Everyone gets up off the
chairs for the key change.

There's your number one
album. But will anyone
remember it in twenty
years' time?

I feel like we have
to teach to a mark scheme –
we grade creativity.

And I'm the gatekeeper;

other teachers are gatekeepers
then ultimately the examiners
are gatekeepers for what is
creative and what works.

I'll read something – and I've
said to students, "this is brilliant,
but don't do it in the exam".
I've got a couple of students

like that, where I'm like

"oh God – the exam's not
tailored for you".

(Daniel, 2019)

Daniel (2019) likens writing in an English assessment to creating a generic pop song: "[t]here's your number one". Like a pop song, a student might hit all of the requirements to be deemed successful, but as Daniel (2019) says "will anyone remember it in twenty years' time?". There are no doubt pop lovers out there that can highlight pop songs that are remembered years later, but I understand Daniel's point. The pop song perhaps serves the purpose of making a record company money and conceivably no longer represents artistry

and difference. Much in the way that teachers teach students to pass an examination that serves the purpose of supporting students on a data set 'flight path' that feeds a factory-like process and is no longer about teaching and learning or personal growth (Hutchings, 2015; Torrance, 2018). The poem captures Daniel's point about pop music having a formula:

Verse,
chorus,
verse,
chorus,

bridge;
key change.

(Daniel 2019)

The layout of this section of the poem highlights the way Daniel articulated his ideas in the interview, emphasising each section of the pop song whilst gesturing with his hands in a downward motion. It also mirrors how teachers teach students to answer examination questions using formulas (Gilbert, 2012). What follows is my example of a formula that could be used to structure a piece of creative writing in the style of what Daniel (2019) said about pop music structure:

Language feature,
structural feature,
language feature,
structural feature,

narrative arc;
climax!

(Martin, 2020)

Daniel's ideas provoke further reflection on how much English teachers encourage creativity in their students, or rather teach them to pass examinations. This in turn provokes deeper considerations of the creativity of the English teacher that guides students in the classroom.

Daniel (2019) refers to himself as being a "gatekeeper". This demonstrates his awareness of the power he has over what is creative, but that power is seated in his deployment of a mark scheme that is set by an examination board and overseen by Ofqual. Daniel is under the same performative forces as Laura and Rachel and his own creativity is also perhaps restricted. "For teachers, the buy-in to the technical/business orientation to schooling is, I believe, another form of self-preservation" (Eisner, 1985, p.17). Daniel needs to buy into the system to preserve his role as a teacher within a performance culture. He knows he is under surveillance or under threat of scrutiny in his classroom and this causes him to modify his practice as a teacher through the threat or presence of inspection whether one is taking place or not (Perryman, et al., 2018). Daniel (2019) calls himself a "gatekeeper", but he, as with myself and the other teachers I have interviewed, enforce a system of performance which means that teachers have perhaps become the sub oppressors that Freire (1996) discusses; the teachers are oppressed in their creativity also, but they then oppress the students. The system requires teachers that are complicit in processes, even if they are oppressive. The teachers support a performative culture through being complicit in self- surveillance and aiding the normalisation of restrictive practices (Ball, 2003; O'Leary, 2013; Perryman, et al., 2018).

The poem closes with "I'll read something – and I've said to students, 'this is brilliant, but don't do it in the exam' " (Daniel, 2019). This is similar to what Rachel (2019) said earlier regarding students' interesting work that she is concerned will not gain marks in an examination which results in needing to change how the students write. Daniel (2019) continues, "I've got a couple of students like that where I'm like, oh God – the exam's not tailored for you. I know myself that I have seen students write something interesting or different but I have then warned them off doing that in the examination as it is 'too creative' or diverse, which goes against key notions of what creativity is; to think or do things

differently (Cropley & Cropley, 2008; Goleman, et al., 1993). Daniel's (2019) closing point about "the exam's not tailored for you" is poignant in this study. He did not make clear who it was not tailored for at the time of the interview, but I inferred he meant students that wrote creatively, with difference and a sense of agency. The English Language examination is perhaps not tailored for any student that demonstrates any creative ideas that differ from the norm or the selected truth set in the examination mark scheme.

Kimberly Campenello is a poet that experiments with structure and presentation of words, as can be seen in her poem 'Fallen':

(Campenello, 2017, p.79)

'Fallen'is effectively a one word poem, but its structure is what furthers a narrative beyond the meaning of the word. Campenello's approach to structure allows her to tell a story which is open to multiple interpretatons. The placing of the letter 'f' up high with a little drop to the 'a' followed by an 'l' at the same height as the 'f' could tell a story of lifes ups and downs.

Then the second ‘l’ drops, but it is clear to the reader that the ‘e’ then drops further. Campenello then furthers the narrative by dropping the ‘n’ to a very low level. As a simple analysis, this could suggest that someone, or something has fallen so low there is no way back. The one word poem could speak to many people and tell numerous stories through various interpretations. Dymoke (2001) highlights that on an old specification for a GCSE English course, students were advised to avoid writing poetry as it usually attained lower grades than prose. Campenello would have failed that GCSE assessment if she had chosen to write a poem like ‘Fallen’. If Campenello was sitting an English examination now, she would not even have the opportunity to write a poem for assessment as the creative writing section on the current syllabus only covers prose. For students and their teachers, there is perhaps little room to look at writing in a fresh way that contains any difference or deviation (Goleman, et al., 1993). This is mirrored in the particiapants’ pedagogical approach, where there is a fear of difference or diverting from normalised processes; there is perhaps a fear of creativity.

When asked specifically about the mark scheme for the GCSE English Language course, Daniel (2019) picked out one key point: students’ work should be “compelling” (AQA, 2020b).

Compelling

In order to access
this mark scheme I’m
handing them creative
things to kind of replicate –

“writing is compelling” –
you have to be creative
to make it compelling.
People that are critical

of modern art say
“my child could have

done that" –
even if you can't explain it,

even if the brush stokes
aren't as technically
amazing as Turner -
there's still something

about it you can't take
your eyes off.
That's what compelling
is. I try to teach

things that are compelling
rather than allow them
to be compelling themselves.
I guess that's the pressure -

trying to get a certain
amount of students passed
a certain level. You
think:

"I can't just leave
you to your own devices".

I think I've
stifled
creativity –

which is a shame.

(Daniel, 2019)

The artist Tracey Emin (1998) produced the short listed Turner Prize work 'My Bed'.

(Emin, 1998).

I believe that Emin's bed is to art, what Campenello's poetry is to literature. It is divisive in regard to its value as a piece of art, but it provokes discussion and reflection. It is, perhaps, creative and compelling. It is the sort of artwork, or poetry that may cause people to say "well, it's just a bed; anyone can do that", or "she's just written 'fallen' across the page; I could do that". The point is that other people did not do that; Emin and Campenello did. Their creativity might have been born out of resistance to the norms of art and writing (Boden, 1994) within the education systems they were schooled in. If teachers do not have the space to be creative or resist normative processes, it is likely they will not be able to think differently and develop a critical, reflective approach to their everyday professional lives (Cropley & Cropley, 2008).

Daniel (2019) discusses how he teaches the students about other people's compelling work, rather than focus on students becoming compelling in their own creativity. Joubert (2010) said that individuals feel they are not creative as they often compare themselves to creative greats from history. I discussed this point in relation to Rachel (2019) when she argued that it is hard to measure up to great literature, so to be moderately creative is perhaps not as important. This also rings true with Daniel as he focusses on the creative greats in literature, but circumvents the importance of creativity in his students and himself as I will discuss later. Daniel (2019) discusses "the pressure - trying to get a certain amount of students passed a certain level". He knows he will be judged on how his students perform in an examination so reduces creativity in his classroom as he is concerned about leaving students to "their own devices". Adams and Owens (2016) discuss a possibility for education to have as its central purpose the reproduction of democracy where childhood could be a time to support creative and collaborative approaches to learning that promote critical enquiry throughout life. The final lines of the poem highlight how current teaching expectations are not supportive of

creative practices: “I think I’ve stifled creativity – which is a shame” (Daniel, 2019). This is almost confessional from Daniel. It appears that he believes he has stifled the creativity of students, but equally his own creative identity, professionally at least, appears stifled also. This has implications for the chance for Daniel to critically reflect on his teaching practice and support his own creativity and that of his students. Creative practice has perhaps been muted within the performance culture of secondary school English teaching.

4:3 (iv) Daniel and his creative self

The following poem captures Daniel’s (2019) more personal connection with creativity.

Write short stories

I teach short stories
at A level and stuff
like that. I’ve kind of
mentioned it to the students

[that I write my own stories]

and I’ve shown my
wife a few of them -
but it’s not something that -

I feel like maybe if
I’d got something published,
or if I’d won a competition -
you’d almost put in on your
CV wouldn’t you?

“Won, blah, blah, blah”.
But, because I’ve not done
that and probably wouldn’t
win any competitions or

get published -
that’s not like the
purpose of it -

sighs.

Pause.

This poem has a similar feel to it as Rachel's (2019) ideas in 'Measure Up'. In it Daniel (like Laura and Rachel before him), is not overly positive about his own writing. He notes that he would be proud of his work and celebrate it if it was published. This is similar to my own experience of publication, where I moved my writing from a small act of creativity into the realms something published and in the public sphere (albeit on a small scale) (Craft, 2010; Matthews, 2018). I could see some of my own thoughts echoed in Daniel's words as I interviewed him and I reflected on how I would be if he had asked me about my writing. I noted in my sketchbook afterwards that I would have felt awkward and a bit embarrassed about it. This allowed me to reflect a little deeper on what Daniel was saying and strengthened my belief that the semi-structured interview and the found poetry allowed for a discussion that would have perhaps not come through other means.

Daniel (2019) says "if I'd got something published, or if I'd won a competition. You'd almost put in on your CV [curriculum vitae] wouldn't you?" This links to Rachel earlier in this chapter when she said: "I think then to be moderately creative just doesn't seem to measure up" (Rachel, 2019). For Daniel (2019), it is almost as if being published or winning a competition validates creativity. There is no doubt that there is some truth to this, when I had my first poem published I felt a sense of validation as I could legitimately say that I was a poet as I had evidence to say that someone had authenticated my work (Matthews, 2018). There are questions as to why the participants are not willing to overtly discuss their everyday acts of creativity in their lives, but equally I think I understand the reluctance. It could be that, like Laura (2019) says, they do not want to come across as a "tosser", because in English teaching circles discussion of teacher writing never seems to come up (Gilbert, 2012) and does not seem to be encouraged or celebrated. English teachers discuss the writing

of renowned writers but not their own writing. This stops English teachers developing as creative practitioners.

Daniel (2019) continues "[b]ut, because I've not done that [had anything published] and probably wouldn't win any competitions or get published – that's not like the purpose of it". This could imply that Daniel is engaging with writing for personal reasons; he gets something out of the act of writing, although he does not see the link to his professional life. Gilbert (2012) highlighted how he kept his identities as an English teacher and creative writer separate for many years, which is similar to the English teachers in this study. In my experience, job interviews for English teaching posts do not ask teachers about their creativity. The majority of interview questions centre round student progress and how well teachers can utilise data. Daniel's own sense of creativity is perhaps a product of the performative world in which he lives and works that places little, or no emphasis on the potential importance of personal creativity. The identity of a writer or creative individual are separate to being an English teacher.

4:4 Dawn's story

Dawn has been teaching since she left university and is now about to retire. She has taught English across the secondary school age range in a number of schools and spent time in senior roles on school leadership teams. At the time of the interviews she was working as a part-time English teacher.

4:4 (i) Dawn and creativity in English: ideas and feelings

The following poem stems from Dawn's general ideas about creativity.

Ideas and feelings

I think it's important
that children have
means of expressing
ideas and feelings.

And things that come
from within themselves
as well – I think it's
important that we can

recognise creativity
in other people –
but it's important that
we all have that

opportunity, that
outlet for
ideas and feelings.

(Dawn, 2019)

Dawn (2019) believes in the importance of creativity in the lives of both teachers and students. She notes her opinion of the significance of students having an outlet, a "means of expressing ideas and feelings". Having an outlet or a place to express ideas and feelings can allow both students and teachers to consider other options and give opportunities for critical thought (Craft, 2010). Daniel (2019) noted that he wrote for himself occasionally, meaning there was something personal in his creative actions. Perhaps that is like the outlet that Dawn (2019) discusses in the previous poem as she suggests creativity comes from within the self. Again, this centres on the personal, the human spirit or creative soul (Ball, 2003; Goleman, et al., 1993). The poem begins with Dawn talking about the students, but I believe that her words are relevant to all human beings who if given the space for a creative outlet, can find positive outcomes (Winnicott, 2010).

The poem finishes with "I think it's important that we can recognise creativity in other people – but it's important that we all have that opportunity, that outlet for ideas and feelings"

(Dawn, 2019). This is similar to Winnicott's (2010) claim that creativity makes life worth living. In a world in constant flux people need to explore and develop throughout their lives, but how that learning takes place is of paramount importance. Individuals who learn throughout life successfully and are happy doing so are those that actively seek to develop their own creativity (Lucas, 2010). This seems to be the case when looking back at the other participants in this study. For example, when Laura (2019) talks about working as a teacher compared to acting, there is a clear contrast between the joy of performing and mundane existence of teaching, or on Rachel's (2019) lack of outlet for creativity as she seems caught up in performative practices. There is little room for creative practice, to allow for ideas and feelings to flow and to find a more collaborative approach to English teaching. According to Bauman (2010) the best chance we have in a globalised culture is to swim together, or we run the risk of sinking together. Performance measures have not just changed who teachers are as teachers, but as people who are encouraged to compare their practices to others rather than seek to work collaboratively (Ball, 2003); there is a real danger of sinking in this culture.

Creativity

In an ideal world we don't
crush that.
It's there.
It is there.

I think it's something
that is intrinsic that
we have and
we develop.

I do feel,
sadly,
that that's not happened
for a number of years

in the way we approach
English.
I worry that actually

what we've

done is we've
restricted their creativity

and now they just
don't know where
to find it.

(Dawn, 2019)

The use of 'crush' is a powerful verb leaving an implication of creativity being squashed, or reduced beyond repair. This links to Laura's (2019) points about the past being more supportive of creative practice compared to contemporary times where the space to be creative is more limited. Dawn (2019) almost repeated herself when she said, "It's there. It is there". The 'it' is creativity and Dawn's repetition and insistence stuck with me after the interview. Dawn (2019) insists it is there; underneath all of the performative measures in schools individuals are being creative, or have the potential to be (Boden, 1994). Conversely her words could be considered a lament for the creativity to be seen and engaged with before the curriculum and performative measures "crush" it completely.

Dawn (2019) implies that creativity is something that human beings develop over time and teachers are responsible for supporting its development. "I do feel, sadly, that that's not happened for a number of years in the way we approach English". This reiterates how curriculum changes and the expectations of a performative culture can restrict creativity in both teachers and pupils (Ball, 2003, 2013b; Eisner, 1985). The poem ends with "I worry that actually what we've done is we've restricted their creativity and now they just don't know where to find it" (Dawn, 2019). When I interviewed Dawn, these words resonated with me. I have noted already that these poems are not great works of literature, but they are trying to capture something and at the time Dawn's words sounded almost poetic and offered a natural end to the poem: "they just don't know where to find it" (Dawn, 2019). "They" is most likely a nod to the students, although perhaps teachers no longer know where to find

creativity, especially those more recently qualified. I have noticed myself that students often do not want to undertake creative acts; they increasingly focus on passing examinations as do the teachers (Apple, 2006). Students have become engrained in performative, neoliberal practices; they are children of the market place (Keddie, 2016) as teachers are teachers of the market place. Children of the market place have expectations that support performative practices and restrict the creative practice of the teacher, while the teacher restricts their own practice as well.

There is a theme running through the poems from all of the participants that creativity is hard to find, grasp or needs time to implement as though it is something separate from the real life of work and not an integrated part of it. Eisner (1985) discusses timetabling of arts, or creative subjects. He highlights they are often on Fridays, or at the end of the school day which suggests "that the arts are essentially forms of play that one can engage in only after the real work of schooling has been finished" (p.92). In education systems that focus on high stakes testing creative activities are reduced and material that is not directly on a test is ignored (Neumann, et al., 2020). This is exemplified in England in extracurricular activities that take place after the school day, or are squeezed into lunch breaks. Notions of play that can be engaged with after the real work is completed is seen in Rachel's (2019) reflections when she talked about silly lessons and needing to be serious. It is also seen in the other participants through a belief that there is limited time for creativity in English lessons. With limited time on the curriculum for the arts, the expectation is that creativity predominately takes place in an after school club. Eisner (1985) highlights how "this reinforces the belief that the arts do not require rigorous and demanding thought and that they are really unimportant aspects of the school program" (p.92). It is my belief that a promotion of the arts as being lesser than other subjects belittles not just arts subjects, but creative approaches

as a whole in English and across the curriculum. This idea finds its way into students, parents and teachers and how they think about creativity and difference in education. It affects the identity of teachers as they increasingly become an image of a measurable professional, rather than a free thinking one that can act with agency.

4:4 (ii) Dawn and measuring success: students in boxes

Dawn continued to reflect on her views on the education system as the interview progressed.

Children in boxes

We're just all the time,
trying to put children in

boxes

and put what they
can do in a

box

so we can
measure it and
I think it's
had disastrous consequences.

I think students have got
less and less confidence in

their own ideas, in
their own responses,
their own thoughts;

they just do not know
where to start.

(Dawn, 2019)

This poem begins with reference to target grades, flight paths and the predetermination of students' achievement based on data (Neumann, et al., 2020; Torrance, 2018). Dawn (2019) argues that students are put in their boxes according to their capabilities so that progress can then be measured. In a performative culture there is an expectation to see each teacher

having precise, measurable goals for each area of study being taught and then the data that stems from measurable assessment can be used to judge that teacher's worth (Ball, 2015; Eisner, 1985). Each objective needs a form of summative, measurable testing that is used to decide whether the student has accomplished the set objective. The students might be given a list of these objectives prior to learning thus resulting in an elimination of all ambiguity. The student is lost in objectives and targets and so too are the teachers who become people that deliver the curriculum rather than professionals with agency (Ball, 2013b). Students in England each have a target grade based on their SATs scores which determine not just their targets, but their sets and (possibly) the way teachers see them (Torrance, 2018). Ambiguity, if not eliminated, has certainly been reduced. Teachers are held to account on whether students get their pre-determined target grade which Dawn suggests leaves them categorised, or placed "in boxes" (Dawn 2019; Torrance, 2018). She is unequivocal in her opinion on the measuring of students when she claims it has had "disastrous consequences" (Dawn, 2019). Dawn's perspective is that the consequence of a performance culture centred in written examination results is that students have got a reduced confidence in their own approach to learning especially in relation to creativity. This is best captured in the second to last stanza:

their own ideas, in
their own responses,
their own thoughts;

(Dawn, 2019)

The possessive 'their' should show an ownership, but the suggestion from Dawn is that students have limited ownership of ideas, responses and thoughts. The students that she is discussing are in classrooms with teachers that the extract from the poem above could also be applied to. The teachers in this study perhaps have limited confidence in their own ideas and thoughts. Freire (1996) argues for the supporting of the development of a critical consciousness in people. He highlights that the concern of oppressors lies in the idea that

critical consciousness "may lead to disorder" (p.17). This resonates with debates about creativity in the classroom, as a creative mind is perhaps a thoughtful mind that thinks critically and asks questions. A system that restricts creativity and critical thinking, supports a culture of measuring students' and teachers' abilities whilst reducing the potential for resistance. This is turn leads to preservation of the status quo. Freire (1996) said "[c]ritical consciousness, they say, is anarchic. Others add that critical consciousness may lead to disorder. Some, however, confess: Why deny it? I was afraid of freedom. I am no longer afraid" (p.17). Through my findings I believe that I have found a fear of freedom in schools. As I have noted previously, there are restrictions on teachers some are real and some are perhaps of the mind stemming from a fear of being seen to be doing the wrong thing (Ball, 2003, 2013a; Foucault, 1991; Perryman, et al., 2018). If Dawn (2019) is correct that the students have a reduced faith in their own thoughts, then this could also be true for the teachers themselves. The poem ends with "they just do not know where to start". Like with the previous poem, this text ends with sadness and on a poignant note suggesting that discursive practices leave people unsure as how to even begin to start with creative practices, or to think outside of the normalised field of judgement (Ball, 2013a).

Dawn's (2019) concerns over a reduction in creativity in English was further explored when she was asked about mark schemes and English examinations:

Fits neatly

Clearly they're penalised
aren't they for being creative
'cause they're out of the box.

You can only be creative
nowadays within boxes
so that it fits neatly.

Rachel (2019) highlighted a concern about boys that wrote 'well', as she felt she had to change how they wrote in order to fit in with expectations set by the examination criteria.

Equally Daniel (2019) noted a concern about the examination not being tailored for the writings of his more creative students. So to, Dawn (2019) notes how students might be penalised if they think differently because "they're out of the box". What she is alluding to is that students are perhaps only encouraged to think creatively in narrow margins so that they can meet the demands of the assessments. This ties into Rachel and Daniel's (2019) concerns about assessments changing how they teach their students to write. In the second stanza Dawn (2019) notes that everything needs to fit neatly into a box. This comes back to ideas about working in a world that can be measured and quantified and fits within the measurable boundaries pre-determined by a number of often unseen forces (Ball, 2013b; Eisner, 1985; Gielen, 2013; Perryman, et al., 2018)

4:4 (iii) Dawn and her creative self

The following poem emerged from Dawn's reflections on the first interview.

My own creativity

When I thought about my own creativity,
I think – perhaps – I didn't quite do myself justice
'cause I said, "okay I'm not creative".
But I think I am very creative at work –
        given the chance,
I do like to do things differently –

but I think increasingly that's seen as
being rebellious and not towing the line.

I like working my own way through it.

I think outside of school I'm creative more
than perhaps I gave myself credit for.

(Dawn, 2019)

Dawn notes that she does now consider herself creative in the work place after having had time to consider our first conversation and reflect on the transcript and found poems I provided her with prior to the second meeting. In the poem, the first two-line stanza

highlights what I have read to be a positive view of her creative identity: “given the chance, I do like to do things differently” (Dawn, 2019). The second part of the quotation highlights Dawn’s desire to be creative and experiment in her professional practice. The first part of the quotation is perhaps rather telling when she notes she can be different if “given the chance” (Dawn, 2019). This implies that creativity almost needs to be authorised. It is perhaps that she is articulating the same restrictions as Rachel (2019) when she talked about having many unspecified tasks she needed to undertake within a performative, surveillance culture (Ball, 2013a) that get in the way of being creative. Equally, Dawn could be referencing the curriculum itself getting in the way of creative acts. The second two-line stanza seemed to need to stand apart as the mood of the poem shifts: “increasingly that’s seen as being rebellious and not towing the line” (Dawn, 2019). Eisner (1985) suggests “the dominance of a scientific epistemology in education has all but excluded any other view of the way in which inquiry in education can legitimately be pursued” (p.17). This results in a choice for teachers: either fall in line and adapt their identity to fit the measurable systems in place, or risk resisting and being considered ‘mad’ (Ball, 2013a; Foucault, 2009a). Dawn (2019) argues that doing thing differently results in her not towing the line. She almost becomes a rebel, but perhaps gets away with it as she is an experienced teacher who was a senior leader and is about to retire; she can take the risk. More recently qualified teachers whose pay progressions to some extent rely on measurable outcomes might not find acts of rebellion possible.

The one-line stanza “I like working my own way through it” (Dawn, 2019), is important and needed to stand out which is why I placed it by itself. The statement suggests a stubbornness to maintain a sense of agency and self. Dawn seemed more guarded, or less reluctant to discuss her creativity with me in the first interview. It is clear that after the first interview she

thought about our discussion and then read the transcript and found poetry which provoked a greater desire in the second meeting to discuss her own creativity. Through me sharing the creative act of found poetry with her invigorated discussion of her own creativity and so the conversation between us became more inclusive; it encouraged a mutual understanding between the two of us (hooks, 2019).

4:4 (iv) Dawn and the assessment system

The following poem is Dawn's (2019) reaction to the recent changes to the examination system and the English curriculum.

Mr Gove said we couldn't

I am not doing things the way
I am supposed to do them.
For example, with that paper
at the beginning of year 10*,

I was going to teach them 'Mice and Men'
even though Mr Gove said we couldn't.
And even though we weren't supposed to be
teaching them a book-

we were supposed to be doing death by extract –
I feel that we made that work – the kids
weren't entirely on board because
they kept saying

"why are we doing this if we're not doing it on the exam?"

That comes back to some of the students
being unwilling to explore things that are
not part of the assessment.
I feel that I'm being rebellious, but
I'm at a point in my career where
I don't care, 'cause at the end of
the day I will do the things
that I think work for the
children and that
I enjoy doing
as well.

*Mock examination

Michael Gove was the education secretary that oversaw the changes to the English education system from 2015 onwards. The ideals implemented by his education department have been part of recent changes to how English is taught and measured in English secondary schools (Caldwell, 2015; DfE, 2010, 2013, 2014; Torrance, 2018). This poem supports my point that Dawn is perhaps liberated by coming to the end of her career. The closing stages of her career are mirrored in the structure of the poem; the decrease in line lengths visually present her career coming to an end. In the closing stages of the poem Dawn (2019) notes that she feels she can do things differently and be more creative with her teaching because "at the end of the day, I will do the things that I think work for the children that I've got and that I enjoy doing as well". This is very different to what Rachel and Laura (2019) noted about feeling like they were caught on a treadmill.

When Dawn (2019) tried to engage the students in English through a manner that did not correlate with the rest of the cohort, she noted that the students were "not entirely on board because they kept saying "why are we doing this [reading 'Of Mice and Men'] if it's not on the exam" ". In a neoliberal, market driven culture the students may have a point. There are questions as to the worth of studying any literature that students will not have an assessment on. This is perhaps explained by hooks (2018) when she says "[m]any professors are afraid of allowing no directed thought in the classroom for fear that deviation from a set agenda will interfere with the grading process" (p.157). It is ironic in the situation that Dawn finds herself in that it is not her that is afraid of non-directed thought or tangents, it is the students themselves as they are complicit in the normalising processes of performativity. It seems that students have grown up in a world where they increasingly moulded to care about the examination as they are normalised into a regimes of truth that education is about passing an examination (Keddie, 2016; O'Leary, 2013; Perryman, et al., 2018). Dawn (2019) was

dismayed that the students did not see the value or the potential enrichment of studying a whole text ('Of Mice and Men'), as opposed to short extracts like those featured in an English language examination. In truth, studying a whole text would not likely be detrimental to their studies in English language. Students would still practise the same skills needed for assessment but in a way that differed from a teaching to the test model, however students perhaps expect lessons that have clear objectives and link to passing an examination. This has become the norm for students as they have become normalised into expectations of lessons and may resist changes or perceived deviations (Keddie, 2016).

4:4 (v) Dawn and tangents: limited room to be different

Dawn echoes other participants in this study in the following poem as she discusses deviating from what may seem like the serious business of examination preparation.

Tangent

There's no opportunity to go off at a tangent
and do things that we might perceive as
fun –
you know it's all about just getting through the text.

Nationally there's been a
squeezing
of the more creative subjects like

drama and
music and
art –
and certainly a focus on the subjects
that will fill the right buckets*.
There are still staff who are committed to creativity,

but they're things that tend to be a bit marginalised,
a bit side-lined,

because the main focus
– it seems to me –
is on data and measuring children.

*Buckets is a term used to describe the various option subjects that must be 'filled' for schools to make progress against Progress 8 measures (DfE, 2014)

(Dawn, 2019)

The poem opens with Dawn (2019) lamenting there being limited chances for going off on tangents or engaging with notions of fun, as teachers are fearful of the need to get through content (hooks, 2018). This idea comes back to notions of seriousness in teaching seen in Rachel's (2019) comments earlier. A fear of normative processes restricts the chance for tangents, or creative exploration around subject content as the behaviour of teachers is adjusted to fit socially acceptable expectations (hooks, 2018; Perryman, et al., 2018). Even though Dawn is the most rebellious of the participants, she still is subject to a performative culture and her words echo the points of other participants who all articulate a general feeling of a lack of space to be creative. Dawn (2019) notes the impact of the English Baccalaureate on the curriculum when she says "[n]ationally there's been a squeezing of the more creative subjects like drama and music and art". This again throws up questions surrounding English as an art (Marshall, 2010) and creativity across the curriculum. Creative acts in the arts are hard, if not impossible to measure. This makes them seem more futile and irrelevant when students are being prepped for a GCSE system centred in targets stemming from notions of a measurable approach (Torrance, 2018). If the arts become increasingly irrelevant, then creativity in English or the curriculum as a whole takes a hit as measurable approaches to learning prevail. The poem ends with: "[t]here are still staff who are committed to creativity but they're things that tend to be a bit marginalised, a bit side-lined because the main focus – it seems to me – is on data and measuring children" (Dawn, 2019). The marginalisation of creative subjects in recent years, coupled with the E-Bac has cut down the presence of creative practice and ideas across the curriculum as a whole (Neumann, et al., 2020). Whilst Dawn may well be correct in her assertion that there are still teachers who are striving to

work creatively, in this research so far I have found English teachers that have a reduced space to be creative in a performative culture.

4:4 (vi) Dawn and belonging: that is no system for creative teachers

Towards the end of my interview with Dawn, the reflection came round to the closing of her career. The following poem was a sombre ending to our conversation.

Belong

You end up feeling
like you don't belong.

I don't do things without
thinking them through.

I firmly believe that
I am doing the best that
I can do for the students that
I've got and
I'm trying to make things more palatable –

I feel that I don't fit anymore.

(Dawn, 2019)

The poem begins with a poignant tone when Dawn (2019) says "[y]ou end up feeling like you don't belong". Earlier in this analysis I paraphrased Yeats (1967) when I said "that is no system for creative teachers". The increasing performative nature of the culture in which they live and work, could leave many teachers not recognising schools or their identities therein. In some cases, this could be the actual physical school that has changed around them, or it could be the subject area of English itself that teachers thought they knew. Dawn (2019) highlights that in regard to the examination system, she is "trying to make things more palatable". I was not fully clear on whether she meant more palatable for her, or for the students. The danger of schools becoming examination factories (Hutchings, 2015) could be that both teachers and students start to chase target grades, rather than the exploration of

knowledge and the self. The poem ends on a sad note: “I feel I don’t fit anymore” (Dawn, 2019). Dawn has seen a number of changes in education in her career; it is clear that at the end of it she is left feeling that she is no longer part of the system.

4:5 Summary

In this chapter I have analysed, explored and presented the voices of the participants through found poems. I have drawn out some of the key themes and ideas that are present in regard to creativity in the lives of the English teachers that have participated in this study. In the next chapter I will present a deeper analysis of my findings and a focused examination of my key ideas.

Chapter 5: Deeper findings and synthesis of ideas

This thesis is an examination of a focussed group of English teachers' perceptions of creativity in their lives. In the previous chapter I explored and presented their voices through the use of found poetry. The narrative the poems and the analysis tells in Chapter 4 stems from interviews with the participants and weaves in key themes found during the research. Found poetry was utilised as a means to both gather deeper responses from the participants during the interview process and as a method to present their stories. I also kept a reflective sketchbook during this process to support my reflexive approach. This chapter will discuss the key themes introduced in Chapter 4 and summarise my findings of the research regarding the questions I set out in Chapter 1 and the literature I explored in Chapter 2.

The key questions I set out to answer were:

- Do the English teachers featured in this study see themselves as creative?
- Do the English teachers featured in this study value creativity (both ordinary and extra ordinary)?
- Does a performative culture affect how the English teachers in the study believe they can have agency to teach and support creativity in their lessons?

Finally,

- Can found poetry provide a way to present the voices of English teachers that is novel, but illuminating?

I will address these questions throughout my analysis of key themes in this chapter. I will then summarise the answers to these questions at the end of the chapter.

Chapter 4 presented key ideas and notions that provided me with the following findings:

- The teachers in the study believe that they have little time to engage with creative acts. This results in smaller, every day acts of creativity having less value as teachers' time is mainly focussed on examination preparation driven by a narrow field of judgement of what being an English teacher entails
- The participants are often self-deprecating about their own creativity and for the most part do not seem to see it as part of their professional role. They talk their creativity down, including making disparaging remarks about their own work. While the participants predominately acknowledge creativity to be a good thing in general, they struggle to place it in their work lives and in some cases in their personal lives
- There is a conflict between the implementation of normalised processes in work, versus ideas of self-agency and identity. The most experienced teacher, who is nearing retirement, is the most likely to resist normalising processes as she is less fearful of performance measures. The less experienced teachers feel the need to conform and therefore they interpret creativity as being an endeavour that is separate from the staid, or serious world of accountability
- More experienced teachers often look to the past nostalgically believing it was a better time with more room to be creative. They value the creativity that they perceive existed in the past and lament what they consider to be its loss
- The participants do not seem particularly happy in their roles as teachers and believe that assessment procedures, or their perception of them, enforce a need to conform; this limits creative practices and agency
- Performativity drives a need for participants to be complicit in implementing performance measures. Being creative becomes an act of rebellion

I have narrowed these findings down to three key themes for a final analysis and synthesis of key ideas:

1. Restrictions to creativity through perceptions of assessment and performative processes
2. Limited space for deviation or difference
3. Teachers as unhappy robots

5:1 Restrictions to creativity through perceptions of assessment and performative processes

When I discussed the literature in relation to this study in Chapter 2, I outlined assessment procedures in England and how they form part of a performance driven culture in English schools. Student assessment is part of a network that underpins a performative culture that provides a basis for critique of teachers (Ball, 2013b; Torrance, 2018). Its impact on the teachers' creativity is a key theme that was present throughout the reflections of the participants that I have discussed in Chapter 4. Laura and Dawn (2019), the two more experienced teachers, held a belief that student assessment procedures cause a loss of creativity for both the teacher and the student. This loss has been heightened by recent changes to assessment procedures in the curriculum in England (Ball, 2013b; Torrance, 2018). Laura (2019) demonstrated a belief that a move to final, closed book examinations in English had changed her creative approach to teaching which made her more "formulaic". All of the participants have a fear of what students' assessment results will say about them as teachers which drives a restricted approach to pedagogy that limits creativity. English assessments are multifaceted during the course of a school year and take many forms, but key assessments for year 11 are a set of mock examinations in autumn, another in the spring and then the final examinations in the summer. These three key assessment periods work in

conjunction with tests in lessons and a series of reports and data logs recorded on an online system. This online data is then monitored by people in various levels of authority (including the teachers themselves) to check students are making progress against their 'flight path' (Torrance, 2018). Patterns like this exist for all year groups and if students are not on track to achieve their end of year target grade, teachers need to be able to justify why and evidence which processes are being enacted to ensure targets are met. Foucault's (1991) panopticon is an apt metaphor for watching over the teachers through lesson observations and student book checks, but it is Page's (2017) reference to Baudrillard's (1997) hyperreality that also resonates here. In a performance culture what the data systems say about a teacher's effectiveness and worth becomes more important than the actions in the classroom; the results represent the teacher's worth as her professional knowledge and beliefs are diminished (Ball, 2015). For teachers like Laura (2019), this is why the assessment systems seem "formulaic". Indeed, all of the participants appear to narrow their pedagogy in a belief it will support the students to get the grades their 'flight path' dictates (Torrance, 2018). This is negative in terms of the teachers' creativity as they have a fear doing anything that may appear different and not seen to be overtly supportive of an examination culture in the normalised field of judgement (Ball, 2013b).

Dawn (2019) also noted similar ideas of formulaic approaches to teaching, although as she was nearing retirement she held a belief that she could still be creative and act with greater agency than the other participants as she did not really care what anyone thought of her. This demonstrated a level of resistance that I will discuss later. Dawn is a large contrast to Daniel and Rachel (2019) who, as teachers newer to the profession, do not consider they have the time or space to be creative in class, believing they have limited room to innovate or deviate from expected processes. Restrictions to the creativity of all the teachers in this study often

link to the demands of assessments they have to prepare students for and the measures that are in place to monitor those assessments (Page, 2017). Students' assessments are a visual incarnation of performative practices. This affected Rachel (2019) the most as her responses implied she felt a lack of freedom with limited space for agency in work. Rachel (2019) referred to the "relentless practising" of examinations which feeds notions of a repetitive factory process within a normalised culture of measuring progress (Ball, 2003, 2013b; Hutchings, 2015; Perryman, et al., 2018).

Rachel (2019) said "the mark scheme makes me…", which implies that the way students are assessed changes how she teaches and alters her as an individual as she moulds her identity to fit with the practices of a performance culture (Ball, 2003, 2013a). Within the pressures of discursive practices, it could be that teachers look for the security of an identity, even if being an English teacher increasingly leaves a feeling of ambiguity (Bauman, 2010). It is not the mark scheme that changes how Rachel teaches and engages with English, it is what the mark scheme represents in a normalised, performance culture. Ultimately it is Rachel that limits herself through fear of being considered as operating outside of the normalised field of judgement; she has been moulded or changed by the culture in which she works (Ball, 2003).

Regarding engagement with creativity Daniel (2019) asked, "do I give them [the students] the creative idea?" He wondered whether he is actually supporting creativity in his classroom, as he gives students ideas they need to use to form a piece of creative writing. This comes from a belief that if he allowed students to be creative themselves then they would likely fail an examination. Fear of failure is present throughout the narratives in Chapter 4. Daniel was explicitly referring to the failure of the students, however failure of students in an examination would be seen as a failure of him as a teacher. Torrance (2018) argues that

making GCSE results based solely on a final examination paper will reduce more varied teaching methods and force teachers to teach to the test. This has implications for the creative practice of the participants as they limit their approaches to teaching in an attempt to reduce student failure and the failure of their performance management processes within a performance culture (Ball, 2003).

Rachel (2019) reflects on students that she feels write creatively with their own style, but believes she has to change them in order to fit in with the examination mark scheme. This represents the notion of the examination factory and is a demonstration of how what cannot be measured will be pushed aside (Eisner, 1985; Gielen, 2013; Hutchings, 2015). This seems to impact on Rachel, as she constructs her lessons in a manner that restricts creativity for both students and herself. Pedagogy that might support or allow her to develop more innovative, critical and personal based processes in her classroom and within herself is reduced, as she is subject to performative processes (Burnard & White, 2008). Equally, Daniel's (2019) concerns that he stifles creativity is not as big a concern as the fear of students failing. The growth in the importance of student data and a demand for measurable outcomes, forms part of the basis of control of teachers as statistics increasingly define teachers' worth (Ball, 2015; Watson, 2019). This restricts the participants' engagement with creativity and supporting a more creative teaching environment for students. Daniel (2019) said he felt like he had to teach to a mark scheme and grade creativity, re-enforcing a conviction that there are pressures upon him to restrict creative practice. This is part of his self-preservation, ensuring he maintains his job (Eisner, 1985). Daniel has been moulded into accepting the regime of truth rather than directly coerced (Foucault 1973, 1991; Perryman, et al., 2018). To varying extents, this is the case for all of the teachers in this study as they are moulded through hierarchical supervision and normalised through sanctions and processes including the

monitoring of lessons and gathering of data and information that allow for judgement of their effectiveness (Perryman, et al., 2018).

The most experienced teacher, Dawn (2019), used the idea of figuratively having to put children in boxes. This means having to categorise students and their abilities based on a system stemming from pressures underpinned by assessments and target grades (Torrance, 2018). Dawn's (2019) points highlighted how attempting to measure student progress throughout the school year reduced chances for creativity or ambiguity in lessons. Foucault (1991) discussed how normalisation becomes an instrument of power and ties into notions of coercion and standardising education including the ranking of students through data (Ball, 2013b, 2015; Foucault, 1991). Ball (2003) argued that normalisation has found its way into all aspects of the school curriculum. This is mirrored in the participants' reflections from Daniel (2019) likening teaching students to write creatively to creating generic pop music that hits all the bullet points on the mark scheme but perhaps does not see variation or difference, to Laura (2019) discussing how assessment systems become "formulaic" with reduced opportunity for creativity.

The participants have a belief that they have to change, or limit their practice to fit the examination system that demands measurement; this causes a reduction in their creativity (Marshall, 2010). The participants become weighed down with the pressure to perform and fear being considered irresponsible, therefore they narrow their pedagogy to restrict more creative, or different acts (Ball, 2013a). The evidence in this work suggests that examination processes themselves reduce creativity, but equally it is the normalising practices that teachers are subject to that lead them to believe that the assessment processes limit creativity. The teachers in this study have the capability to be creative, but they seem weighed down by

the knowledge of their accountability for students' grades regardless of the stories that underpin each individual student. In most cases, the participants have become so engrained in the performative practices of secondary teaching in England, that it leads them to push creativity aside as there is little or no space to explore other ideas or ways of being (Ball, et al., 2011). Performance measures have not just altered the participants as teachers, but has changed who they are as people as their identities are transformed through the practices they are subjected to (Ball, 2003).

The identity of what an English teacher is, has been formed over decades by various techniques of numerous governments (Ball, 2013a). Within regimes of a performative culture, identity is shaped and moulded by the practices of the school the teachers work in and is driven by external ideas perpetuated by power regimes (Ball, 2003). The image of what an English teacher is and does is perhaps different for Dawn, the most experienced teacher, compared to the least experienced teacher Rachel. For Rachel (2019), she seems steeped in a belief that she does not have the freedom to be creative and there was a perception that assessment restricts creativity. This is also seen when Daniel (2019) notes that he believes he might have stifled creativity through his approach to teaching students English and preparing them for examinations where he becomes a gatekeeper. He acknowledges a small level of creative practice when he discussed his own writing, although he did not overtly celebrate his engagement with it, nor blend this work with his identity as an English teacher, choosing instead to kept his identities as an English teacher and writer separate (Gilbert, 2012). The teachers in this study are the product of numerous processes of development and moulding of identity that is constrained by the particular moment in time in which they function (Ball & Olmedo, 2013). Equally, they have developed their identities as

English teachers through multiple processes and although they are constrained there seems to be little talk of resistance.

The space for resistance is restricted, but there is still potential for it as Dawn (2019) acknowledged. The other teachers might demonstrate small forms of resistance, but if they do they did recognise it or wish to discuss it. Laura (2019), who discussed at length her creative engagement with teaching earlier in her career, clearly lamented restrictions on her ability to be a creative practitioner in contemporary times which leaves her feeling flat and deflated. She has had her identity changed by the processes she is part of, so that she finds it increasingly difficult to act outside of them without appearing 'mad' (Ball, 2003, 2013a; Foucault, 2009a). Dawn (2019) lamented a loss of creativity in contemporary teaching, but then was the freest in terms of her own practice in lessons as she knew she was about to retire. The interviews with Dawn were left on a poignant note when she said "you end up feeling like you don't belong". Assessment processes limit creativity, but they are part of broader normalised performative processes. These processes drive teachers to limit their creativity because to demonstrate deviation from expected norms leaves teachers othered or feeling like they do not belong. This creates a lack of space for deviation, or creative thinking and brings me to the next key theme.

5:2 Limited room to think differently: from time constraints to being serious

Boden (1994) argued that creativity can be supported by restrictions and can grow out of a lack of freedom. On the whole, I did not find this to be the case in this study. I found that creativity does not grow out of a lack of freedom within the focussed group of participants that I interviewed. The one exception to this might be Dawn (2019) who was due to retire soon after the interviews took place. She used her pending retirement as a spring board to

greater freedom as she engaged with teaching practices that she believed would support her and the students in the classroom, as opposed to more formulaic standardised practices. Whilst this resistance on one hand seemed to empower Dawn to have freedom, it led to her having feelings of not belonging. Earlier, I paraphrased Yeats (1967) when I noted "that is no system for creative teachers". Engaging in overtly creative acts that go against normalised teaching expectations risks leaving teachers othered, or 'mad' (Ball, 2003, 2013a; Foucault, 2009a). In Chapter 4, I told a story of a revision lesson where, on a whim, I took a year 11 English literature group to a different teaching space and undertook a session with them that did not appear to look like a normalised English lesson. I reflected on my fear of what I was doing, which was heightened by a visit from a senior colleague. I questioned whether a recently qualified teacher would feel they could 'get away' with it. I do not deviate from my English classroom space very often for fear of not fitting with the expected norms; for fear of being considered 'mad' (Ball, 2003, 2013a; Foucault, 2009a). Nicholson (2005) argues that creative spaces are where individuals feel they can take risks and are safe to do so. They feel safe enough to allow themselves and other individuals to experience a level of vulnerability. Through allowing creative moments, teachers could move out of their restricted space either literally or symbolically. They equally can challenge identities that are categorised by particular practices located in specific spaces; this could lead to a new form of identification and understanding of the self. If English teachers do not have the space in which to be creative, then this means they are unlikely to challenge the identity of an English teacher and will limit themselves as creative practitioners. This space I refer to could be physical space, or space in the mind as I will discuss in more detail in the next chapter.

After being given time to think between the two interviews, Dawn (2019) noted that she had initially claimed to not be creative but on reflection said: "I think I am very creative at work".

This was one of the only affirmative responses I received about being creative in work in the present time from any of the participants, although Dawn (2019) did then say "given the chance" which implies her creativity is limited. Giving her time to reflect between interviews and read her comments in both the transcript and the found poetry gave her the space to reflect and consider her responses. Dawn thought about her creative-practice and reflected on notions such as agency and when undertaking learning sequences that differ from normalised expectations noted:

I feel that I'm being rebellious,
but I'm at a point in my career where
I don't care

(Dawn, 2019)

A career drawing to a close perhaps brings enlightenment, although at the same time it leaves Dawn feeling like she does not belong in the teaching profession. I noted in Chapter 4 how Dawn's enlightenment differs greatly from Rachel and Laura (2019) feeling like they were on a treadmill with no end in sight and Daniel (2019) believing he has stifled creativity. This enlightenment comes at a cost though; she perhaps no longer belongs.

Time features heavily as a restrictive force regarding creativity and appears throughout the narratives that feature in Chapter 4. First, the notion of not having enough time to complete tasks and therefore engage with creative practices and secondly through looking back to the past. Rachel (2019) noted how she thought there was very little time to be creative. Daniel (2019), like Rachel, felt he had to get through the box ticking aspect of the written examination and Laura (2019) described feeling like she was on the mill and working in a formulaic system. The theme of time persists in the poetry that emerged from the participants' voices. Rachel (2019) felt that a barrier to creativity was a lack of time, as "there's too much other stuff that needs to get done". It was clear that Rachel does not

believe there is time for everyday acts of creative practice and considered that creativity had to be an impressive gesture, big C creativity or a stand out piece of creative practice to be revered (Boden, 1994; Craft, 2010; Jeffrey & Craft, 2010). Daniel (2019) also seemed drawn to discussing ideas of grand acts of creativity in his reflections as he referenced a range of art forms. Equally, when referring to his own writing he highlighted that he would only really celebrate his work if it had been published, rather than seeing the potential significance of creativity in his daily working life. Equally, if Rachel (2019) does not see that she has the time to consider day-to-day acts of creativity then she might not be able to develop her creative practice, or find any freedom or personal development in her teaching. This ties in with Winnicott's (2010) argument about creativity making life worth living, as Rachel might be happier in her teaching life if she could realise a greater sense of agency in her practice. Rachel (2019) seems to believe she could not engage with some risk taking and leave the security of her structured lesson behind (hooks, 2018; Joubert, 2010):

you're sort of beaten down by the stuff
you have to do beforehand – before
you can have time to think
about things in an interesting way.

(Rachel, 2019)

The performative tasks that Rachel has to undertake as part of her teaching role, restrict her as a teacher; she becomes a managed professional through multifarious performance measures and systems of power that are difficult to pin down (Codd, 2005). If English teachers are normalised into thinking that creativity is not part of their identity as an English teacher, or if they do not value its presence in their daily lives then they will start to believe that they are not overly creative (Craft, 2010; Joubert, 2010).

Time also features in Chapter 4 through the more experienced teachers' tendency to look back to the past nostalgically. When going through my sketchbook, I found the following notes written by me during the process of interviewing the participants.

When I hark back
to the good old days,
I wonder just how
good they were.

Days chasing dreams, now
are memories of moments
of joy in a world that
was brighter.

Now, as I increase in
age, the world becomes
more unfamiliar like an
old song sung by

someone else.

How does that
old tune go again?

(Martin, 2019)

In this draft of an autobiographical poem (Butler-Kisber & Stewart, 2009), I have captured my thoughts that in many ways are similar to Laura's (2019). I begin with a reflection on "the good old days" (Martin, 2019). In a similar fashion, Laura (2019) talked about the past when she trained to be a teacher: "creativity in English was a huge focus". Reflecting on my conversation with Laura, I question how good the past actually was. The past can become an idealised place in our memories, which seems better than the present. I note that as I get older the world becomes more unfamiliar (Martin, 2019). This is similar to Laura's (2019) points about the positive past and the unfamiliar present and Dawn (2019) feeling like she does not belong. Equally, Yeats' (1967) resonates again: "[t]hat is no country for old men" (p.104). Laura, Dawn and I perhaps had space in the past to see other ways of teaching as performance measures increased around us. Indeed, teachers who have had space to see other

ways of teaching "cannot 'un-see' what their actions have now made visible – they cannot, in other words, go back, but nor are the ways forward always clear" (Adams & Owens, 2016, p.38). The pace of constant change throughout recent times has increased and the breadth of this reform has been unprecedented (Ball, 2003, 2013b). This has changed English teaching and what it means to be an acceptable English teacher in a neoliberal teaching culture; it has reduced the space for creativity. It has also created a longing for a past that may, or may not have existed, but there was perhaps at least space to think differently. More experienced teachers cannot un-see what they saw either in the classroom or in their minds in the past, this can create a conflict in contemporary times.

Ball (2003, 2013b) claims that performativity is a system that operates on fear stemming from accountability measures and judgements that control and slowly wear down difference in teachers. Normalised processes are used to support a field of judgement that judges both an individual teacher and a school itself. The place of a creative practitioner in this culture of working is problematic as accountability measures begin to change the identity of the teacher (Ball, 2003, 2013b). Recent changes to education, including various standards and systems of measurement have guided teachers to measure and test students more often (Burnard & White, 2008). The word 'serious' stems specifically in this study from the voice of Rachel, the most recently qualified teacher. Rachel's (2019) concerns are driven by the performance measures in a performative culture; there is no space for "messing around". Rachel's lessons are planned and controlled not improvised, responsive or spontaneous. If she leaves the controlled plan she needs to have contingency in place. Rachel knows that she will be held accountable for her students' grades and judgements about her teaching will be made as a consequence. This causes her to focus on what is important in this culture; the measurable skills which diminishes her professional knowledge, beliefs and actions. Ball (2003) argues

that a performative culture required a new kind of teacher that is produced through educational reforms, who can maximise their performance and leave behind ideas that are not relevant to the measurable culture of improvement. In this culture of performativity, a teacher's identity depends on the ability to embody the discursive practices of an institution and external forces. Performativity becomes common sense or something that is logical, even wanted. Resisting performativity means drawing into question the practices that support the forming of the self (Ball & Olmedo, 2018). Creative acts are not easily measured and therefore are not 'serious', as opposed to an examination that has a mark scheme and sets the tone for a measurable system. An atmosphere of seriousness is often assumed to be essential to the process of learning (hooks, 2018). Rachel (2019) has been normalised into a position to consider that this is the case, as she is under pressure to ensure that the students pass an examination at a level in fitting with their predetermined 'flight path' (Torrance, 2018). Pedagogy that might permit teachers to develop creativity in their classroom and in themselves as practitioners is reduced due to performative processes (Burnard & White, 2008). Rachel (2019) discussed what she called a "silly lesson" when she completed a creative writing lesson prior to a Christmas break. In our second interview she then moved to thoughts about seriousness as a reaction to reading the found poem 'Silly Lesson':

I think there's a pressure to do things
that are serious as well aren't there?
And pressure to –

(Rachel, 2019)

Excitement, or enjoyment of learning disrupts the seriousness of what is assumed essential to the process of learning (hooks, 2018). This comes back to my anecdote about deviating from a set notion of English teaching by undertaking activities often labelled as 'drama' whilst revising 'Frankenstein' with my English class. Lessons that use notions linked to drama can often become inclusive in their nature (Owens & Barber, 1997). While collaborative

processes can often seem like they are fun, or frivolous a profoundly educational experience can actually be taking place (Gallagher, 2000). Rachel (2019) seems to be mindful that seriousness in relation to teaching English is important or the learning might be undermined, which restricts her from seeing learning in a manner that is different, collaborative or creative (Cropley & Cropley, 2008; Goleman, et al., 1993). Rachel is driven by fears that link into pressures of students passing an examination stemming from a performative culture (Ball, 2003, 2013b; Torrance, 2018). Rachel, the least experienced teacher, is the most affected by these fears, although Daniel (2019) noted needing to tick the boxes of a mark scheme. Laura (2019) reflected on how she no longer has the space to dress up as characters from texts, or use musical instruments and has been left feeling that her lessons are less creative now. Even Dawn (2019), who has rebelled the most, noted that it was difficult to move away or deviate as the students themselves question whether the more creative deviations will get them good marks in the examination. O'Leary (2013) argues normalisation is a means to guide teachers to operate within standard norms of what is believed to be correct practice. I too have noted a fear of deviating away from expected expectations of English teaching and feeling restricted in my pedagogy as a consequence.

Boden (1994) argued that creativity can be born from restrictions, but this does not seem to be the case in the working lives of the four participants in this study. It is the pressures of performativity that demand, explicitly or implicitly, that the teachers restrict their creative freedom in order to be seen to be performing correctly (Ball, 2003, 2013b). Performance measures leave teachers with an uncertainty, causing conformity and restrictions to creativity (Ball, 2013b; Page, 2017). Rachel (2019) said: "you know – it's kind of - ", followed by a pause and then "I don't know". This uncertainty and separation comes from a requirement to follow the necessities of performance and be complicit in implementing performance

measures. This results in a loss of teachers' autonomy and restricts teachers' ability to be flexible and deviate where needed to ensure that teaching is relevant and inclusive (Gewirtz, et al., 2019). The teachers in this study do not find creativity in the restrictions (Boden, 1994) as they are entwined with performative processes such as entering data into systems and ensuring students' books meet the beliefs of a performance culture (Page, 2017). Regimes of audit, data analysis and general performativity support compliance (Apple, 2005; Ball 2013a; Page, 2017; White 2010). The participants comply with school systems making them complicit in the restrictive outcomes. I have found Boden's (1994) argument for restrictions being a spring board to creativity as mostly untrue for the teachers in this study. Even Dawn (2019), who does deviate and push against performative measures in search of more freedom, ends up feeling isolate or othered; like she does not belong.

5:3 Unhappy robots

Wright-Mills (1977) argued that people can be turned into automatons through constant, well-paced coercion that takes control of their environment and places pressures and often unplanned experiences upon them. Wright-Mills wonders if people can be made to be cheerful in this situation, as deep down human beings have a will to reason and seek freedom. More recently Page (2017) argued that teachers function within normalised visibility where they are monitored from the time they enter the school building to the time they leave and then through numerous approaches to surveillance compiled together. Normative processes alter behaviours of individuals resulting in standards that socially fit, or are acceptable in a performative culture (Perryman, et al., 2018). Teachers that are subject to normalisation processes begin to adopt expected performances and absorb these actions through acceptance of the set narrative (Foucault, 1991; Perryman, et al., 2018). Wright-Mills (1977) questions while many people will go about their daily business seemingly happily, whether they can be

truly happy in a robotic sort of existence and whether there will be a desire to seek freedom. A system of coercion or control relies on the apathy of the people involved in it, in order to maintain the way things are (Foucault,1973, 1991; Perryman, et al., 2018). The notion of a robot implies that the individuals in question are no longer human, but function within a designated space fulfilling jobs as they are instructed to in a manner that is fitting for that system. As Wright-Mills (1977) questioned whether humans could be happy in that existence, I believe this study highlights how the participants are not happy but do not outwardly resist. This comes back to creativity as Beetlestone (1998) argued that creativity is a positive thing for people as it can provide an opportunity to improve their environment and value of life. Being able to put creative thoughts into action allows individuals to believe life is worth living, but being complicit in the pressures of the status quo could lead to feelings of senselessness for people and a notion that life is worthless (Gewirtz, et al., 2019; Winnicott, 2010). Through my analysis, I have found what I believe are unhappy robots in English teaching. The participants do not seem to be happy in their professional roles, but they follow the rules that are either there or they perceive to be there leaving them to believe they have limited agency and trust in their professional knowledge and actions. For the most part, they go about their working lives completing the tasks set and being complicit in the normalising approaches in education. If they do not, they run the risk of feeling that they do not belong, or potentially call into question their competence as a teacher.

Dawn (2019) noted the importance of having "an outlet for ideas and feelings" and saw the potential of creativity providing that outlet. People who seek out the development of their own creativity are often happier in life (Lucas, 2010; Winnicott, 2010). The teachers in this study are limited in that creative outlet, through the systems that coerce them. Ball (2003) argues that the "policy technologies of education reform are not simply vehicles for the

technical and structural change of organisations but are also mechanisms for reforming teachers… and for changing what it means to be a teacher" (p.217). This results in what Ball (2003) describes as a "struggle over the teacher's soul" (p.217). Mercieca (2013) argues that an individual is comprised of many ideas and influences that the individual has built or assumes that they have; these are hard to disrupt. Regarding student teachers, he questions if they can have space to disrupt their identity and question notions of the self to allow for the possibility of notions of play or difference. The participants in my study have their identities as English teachers limited by normalised processes that are placed upon them, but yet they do not seem to resist or wish to challenge the identity they have. Mercieca (2013) argues for the need to create a space for developing teachers to be freer of normalised structures, embrace their otherness and disrupt identities. The teachers in this study seem to have limited space to reflect on their identity, to find room for collaboration and develop professional knowledge driven by a sense of agency.

Freire (1996) highlights that human beings may have a fear of freedom that they do not admit openly, but choose to hide that fear consciously or otherwise "by presenting themselves as defenders of freedom" (p.18). This has implications for notions of freedom in creativity in teaching. In a system of performativity and normalisation, the communication between teachers is reduced, as is the communication between teacher and pupil which means that teachers can become sub oppressors and restrict freedom, rather than support it. Freire (1996) argues that "[t]o impede communication is to reduce men to the status of "things" – and this is a job for oppressors" (p.109). This comes back to Daniel (2019) when he discussed that he was a gate keeper to creativity, where he had control over the creative ideas of the students, but he did not have control over the examination content. Similarly, Rachel (2019) discussed telling her students to change the way they write in order to fit in with an

examination system that she does not control. They become sub oppressors (Freire, 1996) through their engagement with the performative nature of the education system.

Rachel (2019) discussed not being able to measure up to high level pieces of creative work; Daniel (2019) noted how his creative work would probably never be published. People sometimes do not see themselves as creative, because they portion their abilities against a focussed few respected creative minds leading them to consider themselves to not be overtly creative (Joubert, 2010). Creativity and self-deprecation was clear in the interviews with all of the teachers in this study. They did not seem overly comfortable talking about their creativity and when doing so they talked it down. They either compared themselves against great creative minds (Rachel, 2019), or made disparaging remarks about their own work (Laura, 2019; Daniel, 2019). This is a product of a performative culture as the participants do not see the worth of little c creativity as it cannot be easily measured or quantified (Craft, 2010; Gielen, 2013). This seems to leave them going through performative processes in a robotic fashion that leaves little room for creative freedom.

5:4 Summary

In this chapter I have pulled together the key ideas and themes from the previous chapter and discussed the key findings of this study. I have also reflected on the questions that started off this exploration in the body of the text above.

Do the English teachers featured in this study see themselves as being creative?

The teachers in this study do not see themselves as overtly creative. First of all, regarding their professional practice there is limited room for creativity. The less experienced teachers feel this the most. More broadly, the participants believe that there is limited time for

creativity in their personal lives and if there is they rarely make the link back to their professional life.

Do the English teachers featured in this study value creativity (both ordinary and extra ordinary)?

All of the teachers in the study demonstrated a general appreciation of the importance of creativity, although this was predominantly in regard to big C creativity (Craft, 2010). There was respect for creativity of renowned writers, or for work that is published or available to mass audiences. With the exception of Dawn, the most experienced teacher, there was less appreciation of the importance of creativity in day-to-day practice. This was supported by a belief that there was no room or time for it in work life. While the teachers might appreciate the notion of creativity, there is limited space to support it in schools that are focussed on external, normalised pressures in a culture of performativity (Ball, 2003; 2013b).

Does a performative culture affect how the English teachers in the study believe they can have agency to teach and support creativity in their lessons?

The participants believe there is limited room for creativity in their lessons, as they felt there were restrictions through assessment and other performative processes. In a performative culture centred in monitoring and culpability, the participants have limited agency to develop a creative pedagogy, instead they end up being restricted by the culture in which they work and their perceptions of it.

Can found poetry provide a way to present the voices of English teachers that is novel, but illuminating?

The found poetry has provided an illuminating way to present the voices of the teachers. It was successful in its duality of function to both gather enriched responses from the participants and then to present their voices. I will discuss this in more detail in the final chapter.

This chapter has offered a focussed reflection on the key themes that have arisen in this study. I have outlined key notions about restrictions to creativity and teachers believing they have limited space to be creative. In the next chapter I will outline my conclusions and discuss the project's potential implications for knowledge.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

In this chapter I will outline my conclusions and closing points in relation to this study. I set out to explore how a focussed group of English teachers in an English secondary school experience and engage with creativity. In the previous chapters I have addressed the following questions:

- Do the English teachers featured in this study see themselves as creative?
- Do the English teachers featured in this study value creativity (both ordinary and extra ordinary)?
- Does a performative culture affect how the English teachers in the study believe they can have agency to teach and support creativity in their lessons?

Finally,

- Can found poetry provide a way to present the voices of English teachers that is novel, but illuminating?

The participants' voices I collected to address these questions were gathered through semi-structured interviews with four English teachers in a school in the north west of England. The interviews were recorded and then transcribed before the first round of analysis. Before the second interview, the participants' voices from the first interview were presented to each participant individually through found poetry alongside the interview transcript. After the second interview took place, the voices of the participants were transcribed and again presented through found poetry for analysis and presentation in this study. Utilising an arts based methodology supported me in presenting the voices of the participants in a novel and illuminating way that captured their views on creativity in their lives whilst allowing readers to take on-board my interpretation and create their own. Equally, the sharing of the poetry with the participants supported a democratic approach to the data collection as they had the

chance to see how their voices would be presented through poetry, giving them the opportunity to further their ideas on creativity through conversation. This process enriched the data collection process and was collaborative in its approach.

In the last chapter I discussed key themes and brought together ideas and reflections from Chapter 4. I believe I have addressed my key questions and more through my presentation of the participants' voices and subsequent analysis. I did not set out to explore my own creativity, but I have learnt about myself and my own position as a teacher and developing researcher during this process.

6:1 Key conclusions

The teachers that featured in this study believe they have reduced time to participate in creative acts in their working lives. This is sometimes due to a belief that creativity needs to be a clear display of overt creativity as opposed to thinking creatively in a space that allows freedom to explore teaching practices that could lead to processes of enrichment and agency. There is also a fear that creative approaches to teaching will lead to failure in examinations or be seen to be a deviation away from the expected norms of English teaching. The more experienced teachers in this study reflect sentimentally on the past, arguing they had more creative freedom to act with greater agency. When asked about creativity in their personal lives, teachers were often reticent or self-deprecating about their creativity and frequently did not seem to see a link between creativity away from school and that of their professional role as a teacher (Gilbert, 2012). This is due to how various reforms, centred in neoliberal performative approaches to education, have normalised what it is to be an English teacher in a culture that has seen a corroding of creative practices across the curriculum (Adams & Owens, 2016; Ball 2013b).

Performative processes and pressures of conformity reduce chances for the participants in this study to be creative, deviate or display difference or think and act according to their professional beliefs. There seems to be little resistance to these pressures in their daily lives. Ball's (2003) assertion that a performative culture has the potential to change teachers not just as teachers but as people, has particular resonance in this study as the participants seem to have embraced restriction and made it part of who they are. Boden (1994) claimed that restrictions can breed creativity in the form of resistance. What is clear in this focussed study is that teachers do not tend to resist the pressures of performativity and the normalising structures they work within. In fact, they are often complicit in the monitoring of themselves and maintaining the status quo even if they are not happy. This has a detrimental effect on English teachers' chances to engage in creative practices and seemingly impacts their general happiness in regard to teaching.

For the participants in this study, a performance culture leaves little room for deviation, difference or creativity in their working lives (Cropley & Cropley, 2008; Goleman, et al., 1993). The restrictions to the creativity of the participants is partly due to the performative system in which they work, but they are also complicit in that system and as a consequence restrict their own creativity. Ball and Olmedo (2013) argue that a neoliberal, market driven approach to education presses teachers to define themselves as that which they do not want to be. The more teachers work within a performative culture, the more they start to use the language of performativity with colleagues from NQTs to senior staff. Teachers' identities are formed by the performative structures around them. This is mirrored in my own practice, as I have realised how I limit my own creative acts in work through a fear of performance measures or notions of what is expected of me as an English teacher. That being said, this thesis represents creativity born out of feelings of restriction in my work life. This is most

notable in my use of found poetry and the poetry I have written during the undertaking of this study. Equally, the participants' participation in this study perhaps offers a spark of resistance, or a space to begin as a dialogue took place that considered ideas and practices linked to creativity that may fall outside of the performative, normalised structures of English teaching.

In the last chapter I described the teachers as unhappy robots (Wright-Mills, 1977). People who aim to progress their creativity can be more content in life, but by being complicit in systems that reduce chances for creativity, or deviation can lead to feelings of meaninglessness and, at its worst, to a notion that life is worthless (Lucas, 2010; Winnicott, 2010). I have to conclude that reductions in freedom, creativity or the ability to conduct working lives as a professional with some creative autonomy, can lead to English teachers feeling unhappy in their teaching roles and reduce chances for self-actualisation. This is due to the identity of the English teacher changing and becoming centred in a measurable individual that can be evaluated and judged. Teachers either need to believe in the system, or act like they do in order to function; this can lead to a misalignment of action and beliefs, or the beginnings of a normalised identity.

6:2 Found poetry: an illuminating method

I set out to use found poetry as a means to both capture the voices of the participants and to elicit further responses from them. Through found poetry I found a form of representation that also offered new insights into the place of creativity in the working lives of the English teachers in this study.

When utilising arts based methods Leavy (2015) argued there is no definitive way to evaluate the ideas and knowledge that come from qualitative methods. Whether a method is successful or not depends on whether it facilitates the objectives of the research and supports communication of the findings. I set out to use found poetry to aid the communication of meaning in my findings, but also to provoke discussion within the semi-structured interviews with the participants. Prendergast (2009) argued that poetry in research can have the power to move an audience emotionally and intellectually, whilst managing a variety of issues that tie into the domain of the experiential. Through presenting the participants' voices to them in poetic form, I was able to provoke a new level of response in the second interview and encourage new discussions. The creative act of poetry captured the voices of the participants and also allowed me to use it as a tool to gain new insights into their lives.

The use of poetry to explore the participants' ideas has permitted me some emancipation born out of restriction as my desire to use found poetry stems partly from the restrictions I feel in my working life (Boden, 1994). I noted earlier that I do not consider myself to be a good poet, but I believe my personal engagement with poetry has given me the validity to utilise it in this study. The poetry I have presented is not an outstanding example of poetry, but it functions as an illuminating means to capture the participants' voices. It also provoked discussion in the interview process that provided me with insight that I would not have gained without it. The poetry also offers a reader of this work the chance to see the participants' voices in an illuminating manner that allows for new interpretations beyond mine. Arts-based research can evoke emotional responses from an audience and generate discussion that could act as a validity check and a data source (Leavy, 2015). From my discussions with the participants there was a feeling that their voices were captured and at best were a true reflection of the self (Laura, 2019). I asked Dawn (2019) what she thought

of the found poems that came from her interview transcripts that she had been provided with and she said:

A different lens maybe

I liked them more than the transcript.
What I liked about the poems was

the sentiment was stronger in a way
because of the way they were structured.

I liked that. They're all

quite different, with a
different sort of focus;
a slightly different angle;

a different lens maybe.

(Dawn, 2019)

Dawn (2019) described the found poems as "a different lens". This ties in with reflections in my methodology when I said I wanted to make the familiar strange, or look at voices of the participants in a different way that could provide multiple responses (Clough & Nutbrown, 2007; Solé, et al., 2020; Wiggins, 2011; Willet, 1977). Dawn (2019) noted that she "liked them more than the transcript" as the "sentiment was stronger". I have taken this to mean that the poems have gone some way to capturing her voice and emphasised some of her key thoughts and the feeling behind them. This is important as I believe it further validates the approach I have taken and strengthens the presence of the voice that is presented in the poetry whilst offering a new way of seeing the voices of the participants.

Discussing notions of validity with the participants has given the research another level of legitimacy as they responded to both the prose of the transcript and the verse of the poetry, which provided the opportunity to reflect on how their voices were presented. Equally, I believe that the poetry could transport a reader to new ways of thinking, or seeing the

experience of the participants. I firmly believe that the participants' voices took on a new life through representing them through found poetry. They offer a synthesis of the participants' voices and capture a deeper, potentially more engaging account of their words. I stand by my earlier assertions that utilising a creative form of analysis was important as it captured the voices of the participants in a creative manner, whilst offering new insights. I made the familiar strange whilst going on a journey to a place possibly considered familiar, but the poetry made it unfamiliar which gave me a new and illuminating way to both analyse and understand the voices of the participants in this study (Clough & Nutbrown, 2007; Wiggins, 2011; Willet, 1977). Jonathan Edwards (2020), editor of Poetry Wales, recently argued that:

> There is no better form of remote connection – remote intimacy – than reading a poem. It's always been true that these little bits of empathy on the page connect us to each other more wonderfully than anything else… and give us a true connection. (p.2)

I believe that the found poetry in this thesis offered a way for the participants to connect with their own voices in the interviews with me and then, in turn, offers readers of this work a way to connect with the participants with a deeper sense of feeling and association.

During the interview process, I was working in the same culture as the participants which supported my understanding of their voices and allowed me to interpret them into poems. By exploring the poems with the participants further supported my understanding of their experiences. At the same time, my reflexive approach was maintained as I remained conscious of my own distinct history and experiences and how they affected my exploration (Pillow, 2003). Equally, the participants had time to develop more depth to their thoughts and extend their ideas further which enriched their responses in a democratic process.

6:3 Looking ahead: what next?

On Friday 20th March 2020, while I was completing the conclusions of this thesis, schools in England closed their doors for conventional schooling due to the COVID-19 pandemic. GCSE and A level students' examinations were cancelled with a proposal that grades would be calculated through a mixture of methods, some of which stem from teacher judgement. Teachers' performance management procedures were put on hold and league tables were scrapped for the next academic year. School buildings were turned into child care provisions for some students, while teachers set academic work for their students to complete from home. It raised questions about what it is to be a teacher and what teaching might be on a physical return to work and, regarding this study, left me to consider the place of creativity in the lives of English teachers.

Analysing the voices of the participants in this research has led me to a belief that teachers would benefit from the room to be creative and have the space to think differently or deviate from expected norms. This could be a literal space for differentiation, in terms of a change to how classrooms in English function, or it could be a change of space in the mind regarding how English teachers think. Teachers perhaps do not need to have grand creative ideas, but rather engage in little acts of creativity that could make life seem more worthwhile whilst supporting more democratic, collaborative teaching spaces (Adams & Owens, 2016; Craft, 2010; Winnicott, 2010). The theatre director Peter Brook (1990) stated "I can take any empty space and call it a bare stage" (p.11). Brook (1990) argues that all that is needed for an act of theatre to happen is a person to cross an empty space. He discusses the notion of the Deadly Theatre where plays are performed by good actors, in a manner that seems proper whilst using lively, colourful sets and costumes but something is not right. Something is missing. From exploring the voices in this study, I believe there is something missing from the day-to-

day life of English teaching. Perhaps we are now in the realm of the Deadly Classroom where everything appears proper; there are good teachers, great sets and all the students wear the correct costume but something is missing. I believe English teachers need to find an empty space, whether it is a literal space or a space in the mind. It is often difficult to find that space (Ball, et al., 2011), but perhaps now is the time to have discussions about how English teachers work and how they might function as creative practitioners going forward in uncertain times. Now is the time to look at the knowledge rich curriculum and pose questions about whether there is room to support a more creative approach to teaching and learning and most importantly for this study, reflect on the place of creativity in the lives of English teachers themselves. Creativity may seem at odds with the current curriculum and manner of assessment, but there is nothing to actually say that a more creative approach to teaching would limit success in written examinations. We are at a fork in the road now. One track offers a chance for change and emancipation within a more democratic, inclusive programme of education, the other path leads to greater restrictions through normalised online video learning and tighter models of pedagogy to squeeze students through an examination system that is at odds with these uncertain times.

Robinson (2017) argues that creativity matters as it is part of being human. The developing of original ideas drives human achievement, through putting the power of imagination into practice. For English teachers, how they see the space in which they work could affect how they see creativity in their lives and dictate whether they have room to enact imaginative thinking in order to realise a more creative existence. Space could be the physical space, or the space to think differently and explore a new identity. Bhabha (2010) highlights how identity is never about a pre-given identity, but rather the development of a notion of identity and "the transformation of the subject in assuming that image" (p.64). The English teachers

in this study, including me, have assumed the image of English teachers with limited room to be creative. Ball and Olmedo (2013) discuss externally forced systems of truth in a performative culture that can be found in places such as Ofsted inspections. Inspections and the embodiment of them in teachers' daily practice become a means of self-formation as it makes it almost impossible to rethink the relationship they have with themselves and others in terms of acting differently. It becomes almost impossible to think of the English teacher identity as being one intrinsically linked to creative acts; the space English teachers are working within is becoming increasingly unsustainable in terms of creativity (Ball, et al., 2011). There is a need to find a third space where English teachers can re-think who they are as practitioners and how they function; a space where small acts of creativity might grow. A third space can allow for conversation so that the symbols of culture can be reorganised and read anew (Bhabha, 2010). Hulme, et al. (2009) argue that a third space is a hybrid site that allows for the production of cultural meaning, rather than just reflection on it. I wonder if a physical third space may not be always possible in the current education climate, but a space in the mind could offer a chance to think creatively and produce new notions of what makes an English teacher and how the symbolic representation of the English teacher could be read anew. English teachers need space to think, converse and engage in dialogue so they might read the identity of an English teacher afresh.

Ball and Olmedo (2013) considered resistance and set out to "open a space in which we might begin to understand the daily experiences and practices of freedom of individual teachers" (p.86). They reflect on a series of email exchanges with teachers where they offered a space for dialogue where views on working situations could be expressed more freely and therefore search for answers to questions about power and beliefs regarding professional practice. Through this email exchange, that acts as a third space for dialogue,

the teachers could consider more about what they did not want to be and what they did not wish to turn into. While the teachers in my study did not overtly resist performance measures, engaging in the dialogue with me about creative practice could be the start of a rethinking of identity. The dialogue and presentation of voices through poetry could support a reflection on difference and create an instability that allows for thinking, whilst supporting change (Bhabha, 2010). Finding a third space could help to shift, or support a rethinking of what makes a good English teacher whilst exploring ways to act as a more creative practitioner, supporting difference and encouraging a rethinking of how English teachers are represented (Bhabha, 2010; Hulme, et al., 2009). As they swim through a sea of performativity, English teachers seem to be pulled in all directions by various currents; they certainly cannot resist the currents fully but they perhaps need the space to think about how they might swim imaginatively and therefore make the restrictions in place become a springboard to more creative thinking and practice (Adams & Owens, 2016; Boden, 1994).

People have different relationships to themselves during various aspects of their existence. This causes the individual to have diverse forms of the same subject resulting in a different type of relationship to the self. These various forms of subject form what Foucault (2000) describes as "games of truth" (p.291). Ball and Olmedo (2013) further this by reflecting on the notion of subjectivity as part of a process of becoming what we do as opposed to what we are. For the English teachers in this study, they have perhaps become the image of an English teacher that has been fashioned by power structures stemming from a neoliberal ideology. Ball and Olmedo (2013) argue that resisting contemporary practices seated in neoliberal practice means confronting oneself and allowing reason and critique to lead to a realisation that we are "precisely the ones to be blamed. Resistance to dominant discourse(s) and the technologies in which they are shaped, implies that we must change our

understanding of what being a teacher is all about" (p. 93). In order to do this, teachers need space. The physical spaces in schools for reflection and discussion have been reduced, as staffrooms are increasingly used for other performative tasks (or removed completely) and lunchbreaks are cut shorter. Freire (1996) notes that human beings engaged in acts of communion are able to liberate one another and I believe this study gave the English teachers some space to converse, reflect and enact a form of resistance through dialogue. The semi-structured interviews were conducted in a way that was designed to be safe, secure and supportive and functioned in-between the formal area of English teaching practice (Hulme, et al., 2009). Dawn (2019) noted:

E Block

Geographically I've been very happy
to keep myself in E block.
I'm very comfortable here and I'm very happy here.

I like the fact that we have our
own space and we can share.

(Dawn, 2019).

At the time of the interviews a small community of English teachers were based in an area of the school away from the rest of the department and the main school building. In this space, Dawn (2019) highlighted that she had been happy as she was in a space where she could share ideas with other teachers. Since the interviews took place, the English Department have now been relocated and that space for dialogue has been taken away. Tuan (2011) argues "[s]pace is a common symbol of freedom in the Western world. Space lies open; it suggests the future and invites action. On the negative side, space and freedom are a threat" (p.54). It is not in the interests of regimes of performativity to give teachers space for dialogue. English teachers need to seek out a space for themselves to discuss, reflect and imagine new possibilities.

6:4 Challenges to this study and the potential for research in the future

My thesis set out to explore the place of creativity in the lives of a focussed group of English teachers in England. I utilised an arts-based, qualitative method to analyse the voices of the participants through found poetry. This method allowed me to explore the voices of the English teachers and their experiences of creativity in their lives. As such, this research has not set out to explore the research questions in regard to English teachers in the whole of England, but rather to discover the perceptions of a specific small group. Having said that, these findings still represent new knowledge which may offer insight into English teachers' experiences on the whole. The impact of performative practices on students' creativity was not explored, although this was not the intention of this study. There is scope for exploration of students' perceptions and experiences of creativity in future research and how it is impacted by teachers' approaches to creative practice.

This was a small case study, which rather than being limiting was a strength and a deliberate part of the study design as it allowed for an in-depth analysis of the participants' reflections on creativity. The study allowed me to identify key patterns of significance within the focussed group and explore them in detail (Braun, et al., 2016). The ideas discussed in this work raise questions for further research and exploration in terms of creativity in English and potentially across the curriculum. The research was not designed to speak for all English teachers across England but provide insight into the views and experiences of the English teachers that participated in this study, so that others might also understand their experiences which could offer empowerment through understanding. A better understanding of the participants' position may offer greater chance for creativity to grow in the form of resistance, as questions could be posed of the dominant discourses that shape collective

understanding of what an English teacher is and demand a more open space to understand experience of individual teachers (Ball & Olmedo, 2013).

My research did not set out to look at the creativity of English teachers across their career, but rather capture a perception of the teachers' views of creativity in their lives at the time of interview. I believe there needs to be more research into the place of creativity in the lives of English teachers that examines the benefits of creativity, the difficultly of defining what creativity means in English and whether creativity can allow for emancipation in more productive, democratic work spaces. This belief comes from the findings in this study that present a lack of freedom to innovate and poor conditions for creative practitioners leading to reduced professional agency. There could be further research into how English teachers are trained and encouraged to engage with creative practices that can be actualised in the performative world of secondary English education. Equally, there needs to be further reflection on how creativity in the lives of English teachers might impact on supporting students' creativity and critical thinking. Finally, while there is research into senior leaders' views of subjects traditionally considered to be creative (Neumann, et al., 2020), there could be further exploration into how senior leaders see the place of creativity in 'core' subjects such as English.

6:5 Contribution to knowledge

I have provided a focussed insight into the perceptions of creativity in the lives of four English teachers. Although arts-based methods are growing in popularity, there are limited studies that focus on English teachers' lived experiences told through poetic form by a practising secondary school English teacher. There is a wealth of knowledge available on creativity in the arts, but English is often overlooked as are the English teachers themselves.

This study provides a small offering into what I consider to be a gap in knowledge and an area that needs more discussion and debate. My use of found poetry in relation to the elected focus offers a new and different way of seeing and representing this area of study. It is unique as it provides new ways of presenting and seeing the experiences of English teachers, whilst offering a way to stimulate and think about their role in schools and how they engage with notions surrounding creativity.

I firmly believe that the use of found poetry offers an illuminating way of analysing the voices of the participants and gives both researchers and readers new ways of seeing the data they collect. Found poetry has challenged my own understanding of the role I undertake in work and how I see myself and my colleagues in relation to creativity. My exploration of arts-based methodology has also allowed me to rethink how I comprehend research and broadened my understanding. It has allowed me to paddle tentatively, but imaginatively, against the current in English secondary schools (Adams & Owens, 2016).

6:6 Closing points

In this study I have explored a focussed group of English teachers' perceptions of creativity in their lives. I was able to develop my understanding of the participants' experiences and present them in a novel and illuminating way. What I gained was an insight into the participants' perceptions of creativity in the culture in which they work, but also a deeper understanding of my own engagement with creativity in both my work and personal life. This duality served as a means to support my understanding of both myself and the participants, as the more I understood about their experiences the more I understood my own.

Finally, I am glad I persevered with the arts-based method of found poetry to explore my data and present the voices of the participants. I feared that my approach would not be valued within the current culture in secondary education and it weighed heavy on me throughout this process. In many ways, the more I found the participants' belief that they were restricted in their creativity, the more I was determined to press on with the use of found poetry to analyse and present their voices. The found poems in this thesis ask a reader to consider the words and views of the participants, but also engage with deeper feelings, views and perceptions that both the participants and I wrestle with (Owens & Pässilä, 2020). Through persisting with this method, I consider I have further contributed to the knowledge and understanding of the use of found poetry to both analyse and present people's voices in research as part of a broader movement in arts-based methods. I firmly believe I have addressed a gap in knowledge in English teaching through both my research questions and my approach to presenting the findings of this study.

References

Adams, J., Cochrane, M., & Dunne, L. (2012). *Applying theory to educational research.* Chichester, United Kingdom: Wiley- Blackwell.

Adams, J., & Owens, A. (2016). *Creativity and democracy in education*. Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge.

Apple, M. (2005). Education, markets, and an audit culture. *Critical Quarterly*, 47(1), 1–2. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0011-1562.2005.00611.x

Apple, M. (2006). Understanding and interrupting neoliberalism and neoconservatism in education. *Pedagogies: an international journal,* 1(1), 21-26. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15544818ped0101_4

AQA. (2019). *English Language: scheme of assessment.* Retrieved from https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-language-8700/scheme-of-assessment

AQA. (2020a). *GCSE English Language Paper 1. Explorations in creative reading and writing June 2018.* Retrieved from https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/sample-papers-and-mark-schemes/2018/june/AQA-87001-QP-JUN18.PDF

AQA (2020b). *GCSE English Language Paper 1. Explorations in creative reading and Writing. Mark scheme.* Retrieved from https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/sample-papers-and-mark-schemes/2018/june/AQA-87001-W-MS-JUN18.PDF

Ball, S. J. (2003). The teacher's soul and the terrors of performativity. *Journal of Education Policy,* 18(2), 215-228. https://doi.org/10.1080/0268093022000043065

Ball, S. J., Maguire, M., Braun, A., & Hoskins, K. (2011). Policy actors: doing policy work in schools. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 32(4), 625-639. https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2011.601565

Ball, S. J. (2013a). *Foucault, power, and education.* Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge.

Ball, S. J. (2013b). *The education debate.* Bristol, United Kingdom: The Policy Press.

Ball, S. J., & Olmedo, A. (2013). Care of the self, resistance and subjectivity under neoliberal governmentalities. *Critical Studies in Education*, 54(1), 85-96. https://doi.org/10.1080/17508487.2013.740678

Ball, S. J. (2015). Education, governance and the tyranny of numbers. *Journal of Education Policy*, 30(3), 299-301. https://doi.org/10.1080/02680939.2015.1013271

Baker, J. (ed.). (2014). Found poetry review. volume seven. Seattle, WA: Amazon.

Barone, T., & Eisner, E. (2012). *Arts based research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Baudrillard, J. (1988). *The ecstasy of communication.* Cambridge, MA: Semiotext(e).

Baudrillard, J. (1997). *Simulacra and simulation.* (4th ed.). Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press.

Bauman, Z. (2010). *Identity.* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Polity Press.

Baumann, T., Hussein, H., & Meyer-Sickendiek, B. (2018a). *Style detection for free verse poetry from text and speech.* Retrieved from the ACL Anthology website: https://www.aclweb.org/anthology/C18-1164/.

Baumann, T., Hussein, H., & Meyer-Sickendiek, B. (2018b). Analysing the focus of a hierarchical attention network: the importance of enjambments when classifying post-modern poetry. *Interspeech, 2018,* 2162-2166. https://doi.org/10.21437/Interspeech.2018-253.

Bell, J. (1999). *Doing your research project.* (3rd ed.). Maidenhead, United Kingdom: Open University Press.

Beall, E. (2009). *Guide to writing and producing songs that sell.* New York, NY: Watson-Guptill.

Beetlestone, F. (1998). *Creative children, imaginative teaching.* Maidenhead, United Kingdom: Open University Press.

Bhabha, H. K. (2010). *The location of culture.* (12th ed.). Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge.

Blake, W. (1996). The schoolboy. In Butler, P. (Ed.). *William Blake*. (p.43). London, United Kingdom: Everyman.

Bleiman, B. (2015, September 10). Creative writing axed [Blog post]. Retrieved from https://www.englishandmedia.co.uk/blog/creative-writing-axed

Boal, A. (1993). *Games for actors and non-actors.* (2nd ed.). (A. Jackson, Trans.). Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge.

Boal, A. (2008a). *Theatre of the oppressed.* London, United Kingdom: Pluto Press.

Boal, A. (2008b). *The rainbow of desire* (Jackson, A. Trans) (11th ed.). Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge.

Boden, M. (1994). *Dimensions of creativity*. London, United Kingdom: The MIT Press.

Boden, M. (2010). Creativity and knowledge. In Craft, A., Jeffrey, B., & Leibling, M.(Eds.). *Creativity in education*. (5th edition) (pp. 95-102). London, United Kingdom: Continuum.

Boland, E. (2017). Editorial. In Boland, E. (Ed.). *Poetry Ireland Review. December 2017. Issue 123.* (pp.5-6).

Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information: thematic analysis and code development.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Brady, I. (2009). Foreword. In Prendergast, M. Leggo, C., & Sameshima, P. (Eds.). *Poetic inquiry vibrant voices in the social sciences*. (pp. xi- xvii). Rotterdam, Netherlands: Sense Publishers.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Braun, V., Clarke, V., & Weate, P. (2016). Using thematic analysis in sport and exercise research. In Smith, B. & Sparkes, A. (Eds.). *Routledge handbook of qualitative research in sport and exercise* (pp. 191-205). Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2019). Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 11(4), 589-59. https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2019.1628806

Brill, F., Grason, H., Kuhn, L., & O'Donnell, S. (2018). *What impact does accountability have on curriculum, standards and engagement in education?* Retrieved from National Foundation for Educational Research website: https://www.nfer.ac.uk/what-impact-does-accountability-have-on-curriculum-standards-and-engagement-in-education/

Brook, P. (1990). *The empty space.* London, United Kingdom: Penguin.

Brook, P. (1995). *There are no secrets*. London, United Kingdom: Methuen Drama.

Burnard, P., & White, J. (2008). Creativity and performativity: counterpoints in British and Australian education. *British Educational Research Journal*, 34(5), 667-682. https://doi.org/10.1080/01411920802224238

Butler-Kisber, L. (2002). Artful portrayals in qualitative inquiry: the road to found poetry and beyond. *The Alberta journal of educational research* 19(3), 229-239.

Butler-Kisber, L., & Stewart, M. (2009). The use of poetry clusters in poetic inquiry.In Prendergast, M., Leggo, C., & Sameshima, P. (Eds.). *Poetic Inquiry Vibrant Voices in the Social Sciences*. Rotterdam, Netherlands: Sense Publishers.

Caldwell, A. (2015). *The AQA Creative Writing A-Level is being cut.* Retrieved from: https://www.nawe.co.uk/DB/nawe-news/creative-writing-a-level.html.

Callahan, J. (1976). *A rational debate based on the facts*. Retrieved from History Docs Articles: http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/speeches/1976ruskin.html

Cahnmann-Taylor, M., & Siegesmund, R. (2008). *Arts-based research in education: foundations for practice*. Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge.

Cameron, D. (2011). *PM's speech on education.* Retrieved from the department for education website: https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pms-speech-on-education--2

Campenello, K. (2017). Fallen. In Davies, N. (Ed.). *Poetry Wales. Summer 2017. Volume 53. Number 1. (p. 79).*

Claxton, G. (2008). Wisdom: Advanced creativity. In Craft, A., Gardner, H., & Claxton, G. (Eds.). *Creativity, Wisdom and Trusteeship: Exploring the role of education.* (pp. 35-48). Thousand Oaks, CA*;* Corwin Press.

Clough, P., & Nutbrown, C. (2007). *Methodology, justifying enquiry.* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.

Craft, A. (2003). The limits to creativity in education: dilemmas for the educator. *British journal of educational studies*, 51(2), 113-127. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8527.t01-1-00229

Craft, A. (2010). Little c creativity. In Craft, A., Jeffrey, B. & Leibling, M.(Eds.). *Creativity in education*. (5th ed.). (pp. 45-61). London, United Kingdom: Continuum.

Cropley, A., & Cropley, D. (2008). Resolving the paradoxes of creativity: an extended phase model. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 38(3), 355-373. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057640802286871

Codd, J. (2005). Teachers as "managed professionals" in the global education industry. The New Zealand experience. *Educational Review* 57(2), 193-206. https://doi.org/10.1080/0013191042000308369

Coffield, F. (1999). Breaking the consensus: lifelong learning as social control. *British Educational Research Journal*, 25(4), 479–499. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/1501459?seq=1

Coffield, F. (2002). *The necessity of informal learning.* (2nd ed.). Oxford, United Kingdom: Marston Book Services.

Coffield, F. (2008). *Just suppose teaching and learning became the first priority... .* Dorset, United Kingdom: Learning and Skills Network.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2005). *Research methods in education.* (5th ed.). Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge.

Compton, A. (2007). What does creativity mean in English education? *Education 3–13*, 34(2), 109-116. https://doi.org/10.1080/03004270701311911

Daichendt, G. J. (2009). Redefining the artist-teacher. *Art education*. 62(5), 33-38. https://doi.org/10.1080/00043125.2009.11519035

Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (2003). The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (Eds.). *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials*. (2nd ed.). (pp. 1 - 45). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Denzin, N. (2016). *The qualitative manifesto: a call to arms* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Department for Culture, Media and Sport. (2016). *The culture white paper.* London, United Kingdom: Williams Lea Group.

Department for Education (2010). *The importance of teaching.* Retrieved from https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/175429/CM-7980.pdf

Department for Education. (2013). *Reformed GCSE subject content consultation: Government response*. Retrieved from **h**ttps://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/254513/GCSE_consultation_-_government_s_response.pdf

Department for Education. (2014). *Progress 8: how Progress 8 and Attainment 8 measures are calculated*. Retrieved from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/561021/Progress_8_and_Attainment_8_how_measures_are_calculated.pdf

Department for Education. (2016). *Education excellence everywhere*. London, United Kingdom: The Stationary Office Limited. Retrieved from the department for education website: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/508447/Educational_Excellence_Everywhere.pdf

Department for Education. (2019). *National Professional Qualification (NPQ) Content and Assessment Framework A guide for NPQ participants.* London, United Kingdom: The Stationary Office Limited. Retrieved from the department for education website: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/653046/NPQ_Content_and_Assessment_Framework.pdf)

Dymoke, S. (2001). Taking poetry off its pedestal: the place of poetry writing in an assessment-driven curriculum. *English in education*, 34(3), 32-41. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1754-8845.2001.tb00746.x

Eagleton, T. (2007). *How to read a poem.* Oxford, United Kingdom*:* Blackwell.

Edwards, J. (2020). Editorial. In Edwards, J. (Ed.). *Poetry Wales. Spring 2020. Volume 55. Number 3. (p. 2).*

Education Commission. (1861). *Report of the commissioners appointed to inquire into the state of popular education in England*. Retrieved from the Education England website: http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/newcastle1861/newcastle1.html

Eisner, E. (1985). *The educational imagination: on the design and evaluation of school programs.* New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing Company.

Emin, T. (1998). *My bed* [Box frame, mattress, linens, pillows and various objects]. Tate Gallery, Lent by The Duerckheim Collection 2015 on long term loan. Retrieved from https://frameweb.com/article/my-bed-1998

Faulkner, S. L. (2009). Research/Poetry: exploring poet's conceptualizations of craft, practice, and good and effective poetry educational insights. *Research Gate.* 13(3). Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/253675848_ResearchPoetry_Exploring_Poet%27s_Conceptualizations_of_Craft_Practice_and_Good_and_Effective_Poetry

Finlay, L. (2002). "Outing" the researcher: The provenance, process, and practice of reflexivity. *Qualitative Health Research*, 12, 531–545. https://doi.org/10.1177/104973202129120052

Freire, P. (1996). *Pedagogy of the oppressed.* London, United Kingdom: Penguin.

Freire, P. (2001). *Pedagogy of freedom.* Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield

Fontana, A., & Frey, J. (2003). The interview: from structured questions to negotiated text. In Denzin, N., Lincoln, Y. (Eds.). *Collecting and interpreting Qualitative Materials* (2nd ed.). (pp. 61 - 106). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Foucault, M. (1973). *The Birth of the Clinic: an archaeology of medical perception.* Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge.

Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings 1972-1977* (5th ed.). New York, NY: Pantheon.

Foucault, M. (1991). *Discipline and punish.* London, United Kingdom: Penguin.

Foucault, M. (2000). *Ethics: Subjectivity and truth. The essential works of Michel Foucault, 1954–1984 (Vol. 1)*. London, United Kingdom: Penguin.

Foucault, M. (2009a). *Madness and civilization* (13th ed.). Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge.

Foucault, M. (2009b). *The order of things* (12th ed.). Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge.

Frye, N. (1964). *The educated imagination.* Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Furlong, J., Whitty, G., Whiting, C., Miles, S., & Barton, L. (2000). *Teacher education in transition: Reforming professionalism?* Maidenhead, United Kingdom: Open University Press.

Furlong, J. (2013). *Education – an anatomy of the discipline: rescuing the university project?* Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge.

Fuller, K. (2019). "That would be my red line": an analysis of headteachers' resistance of neoliberal education reforms. *Educational Review*, 71(1), 31-50. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2019.1522042

Fuller, K., & Stevenson, H. (2019). Global education reform: understanding the movement. *Educational Review*, 71(1), 1-4. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2019.1522042

Gallagher, K. (2000). *Drama education in the lives of girls.* Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press.

Geertz, C. (1993a). *Local knowledge* (2nd ed.). London, United Kingdom: Fontana Press.

Geertz, C. (1993b). *The interpretation of cultures* (2nd ed.). London, United Kingdom: Fontana Press.

Gewirtz, S., Maguire, M., Neumann, E., & Towers, E. (2019): What's wrong with 'deliverology'? Performance measurement, accountability and quality improvement in English secondary education. *Journal of Education Policy*, https://doi.org/10.1080/02680939.2019.1706103

Gielen, P. (2013). *Creativity and other fundamentalisms.* Amsterdam, Netherlands: Mondriaan Fund.

Gibb, N. (2015). *The purpose of education*. Retrieved from the department for education website: https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-purpose-of-education

Gilbert, F. (2012). *Who do you love? The novel of my life (creative writing thesis) and building beauty: the role of aesthetic education in my teaching and writing lives (commentary on the creative writing thesis).* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Goldsmiths, University of London, United Kingdom.

Gilbert, F. (2016). *The dark alleyway. Writing in education*, Retrieved from the National Association of Writers in Education website: https://www.nawe.co.uk/DB/article-search/articles/the-dark-alleyway.html

Goleman, D., Kaufman, P., & Ray, M. (1993). *The creative spirit.* New York, NY: Penguin.

Heaney, S. (1996). *The redress of poetry*. London, United Kingdom: Faber and Faber.

Heyl, B. S. (2001). Ethnographic interviewing. In Atkinson, P., Coffey, A., Delamont, S., Lofland, J., & Lofland, L. (Eds.). *Handbook of ethnography*. (pp. 369-383): London, United Kingdom: Sage.

Hodges, G.C. (2005). Creativity in education. *English in Education*, 39(3), 47-61. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1754-8845.2005.tb00624.x

Holloway, J., & Brass, J. (2018). Making accountable teachers: the terrors and pleasures of performativity. *Journal of Education Policy*, 33:3, 361-382. https://doi.org/10.1080/02680939.2017.1372636

hooks, b. (2018). *Teaching to transgress. Education as the practice of freedom.* New York, NY: Routledge.

hooks, b. (2019). *Teaching critical thinking: practical wisdom.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Hulme, M. (2018). What Counts as Quality Teaching?: Diverging Pathways in the Dis-United Kingdom. In Management Association, I. (Eds.), *Teacher Training and Professional Development: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 2100-2119). IGI Global. http://doi:10.4018/978-1-5225-5631-2.ch100

Hulme, R., Cracknell, D., & Owens, A. (2009). Learning in third spaces: developing trans-professional understanding through practitioner enquiry. *Educational Action Research*, 17(4), 537-550. https://doi.org/10.1080/09650790903309391

Hutchings, M. (2015). *Exam factories: the impact of accountability measures on children and young people*. London, United Kingdom: NUT.

Jabbar, H. (2013) The case of 'payment-by-results': re-examining the effects of an incentive programme in nineteenth-century English schools. *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, 45(3), 220-243. https://doi.org/10.1080/00220620.2013.796912

Jardine, G. (2005). *Foucault and education.* New York, NY: Peter Lang Publishing.

Jeffrey, B., & Craft, A. (2010). Introduction: the universalization of creativity. In Craft, A., Jeffrey, B., & Leibling, M.(Eds.). *Creativity in education*. (5th ed.) (p.1-16). London, United Kingdom: Continuum.

Joubert, M. (2010). The art of creative teaching: NACCCE and beyond. In Craft, A., Jeffrey, B. & Leibling, M. (Eds.). *Creativity in education*. (5th ed.) (pp. 17-34). London, United Kingdom: Continuum.

Keddie, A. (2016). Children of the market: performativity, neoliberal responsibilisation and the construction of student identities. *Oxford Review of Education*, 42(1), 108-122. https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2016.1142865

Leavy, P. (2015). *Method meets art. Arts based research practices.* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Lindvall, H. (2011, July 14). Behind the music: How to write a hit song. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/music/musicblog/2011/jul/14/how-to-write-a-hit-song

Long, R., & Danechi, S. (2019). *English Baccalaureate*. Briefing paper Number 06045, 4. Retrieved from: https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN06045/SN06045.pdf

Lucas, B. (2010). Creative teaching, teaching creatively and creative learning. In Craft, A., Jeffrey, B. & Leibling, M.(Eds.). *Creativity in education*. (5th ed.) (pp. 35-44). London, United Kingdom: Continuum.

MacBeath, J., & Myers, K. (1999). *Effective school leaders: how to evaluate and improve your leadership potential.* London, United Kingdom: Pearson.

McNiff, S. (2004). *Art heals: how creativity cures the soul.* Boulder, CO: Shambhala.

Maguire, M. (2014). Reforming teacher education in England: 'an economy of discourses of truth'. *Journal of Education Policy*, 29(6), 774-784. https://doi.org/10.1080/02680939.2014.887784

Marsh, C. (2017). Poetry and assessment: an investigation into teachers' perceptions of the impact of closed book examinations on teaching and learning at GCSE. *English in education*, 51(3), 275-293. https://doi.org/10.1080/04250494.2017.11964034

Marshall, B. (2010). Creating danger: the place of the arts in education policy. In Craft, A., Jeffrey, B. & Leibling, M. (Eds.). *Creativity in education*. (5th ed.) (pp. 116-125). London, United Kingdom: Continuum.

Matthews, M. (2018). Partings. In Gilham, J. (Ed.). *Dream Catcher 38.* (p.67) York, United Kingdom: Stairwell Books

Maynard, K., and Cahnmann-Taylor, M. (2010). Anthropology at the edge of words: Where poetry and ethnography meet. *Anthropology and Humanism,* 35(1), 2-19. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1548-1409.2010.01049.x

Mead, G. (2011). *Coming home to story.* Bristol, United Kingdom: Vala.

Mercieca, D. (2013). Engaging with student-teachers on reflective writing: reclaiming writing. In Murphy, M. (Ed.). *Social theory and education research.* (pp. 200-211). Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge.

Midgley, H. (2016). *Payment by results in nineteenth-century British education: a study in how priorities change*. Retrieved from Cambridge University Press website: https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/journal-of-policy-history/article/payment-by-results-in-nineteenthcentury-british-education-a-study-in-how-priorities-change/725BEF5B0406B1A49E2D12CB435A8053

Moate, J., Hulse, B., Jahnke, H., & Owens, A. (2019). Exploring the material mediation of dialogic space: A qualitative analysis of professional learning in initial teacher education based on reflective sketchbooks. *Thinking Skills and Creativity,* 31, 167–17. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tsc.2018.12.003

Neelands, J. (1984). *Making sense of drama.* Oxford, United Kingdom: Heinemann.

Neumann, E., Gewirtz, S. Maguire, M., & Towers, E. (2020). Neoconservative education policy and the case of the English Baccalaureate. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 52(5), 702-719. https://doi.org/10.1080/00220272.2019.1708466

Nicholson, H. (2005). *Applied drama.* Basingstoke, United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan.

O'Connor, K. (1996). Glossary of Validities. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 25(1), 16–21. https://doi.org/10.1177/089124196025001003

O'Leary, M. (2013). Surveillance, performativity and normalised practice: the use and impact of graded lesson observations in Further Education colleges. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 37(5), 694-714. https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2012.684036

Oliver, P. (2010). *The student's guide to research ethics.* (2nd ed.). Maidenhead, United Kingdom: Open University Press.

O'Neill, C. (1995). *Drama worlds: a framework for process drama*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Owens, A., & Barber, K. (1997). *Drama works.* Manchester, United Kingdom: Carel Press.

Owens, A., & Pässilä, A. (2020). Epilogue. *Organizational aesthetics*: 9(3), 100-110. Retrieved from https://digitalcommons.wpi.edu/oa/vol9/iss3/8

Ozga, J. (2009). Governing education through data in England: from regulation to self-Evaluation. *Journal of Education Policy*, 24(2), 149-162. https://doi.org/10.1080/02680930902733121

Page, D. (2017). The surveillance of teachers and the simulation of teaching. *Journal of Education Policy*, 32(1), 1-13. https://doi.org/10.1080/02680939.2016.1209566

Perryman, J., Ball, S., Maguire, M., & Braun, A. (2011). Life in the pressure cooker – school league tables and English and mathematics teachers' responses to accountability in a results-driven era. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 59(2), 179-195. https://doi.org/10.1080/00071005.2011.578568

Perryman, J. Maguire, M., Braun, A., & Ball, S. (2018). Surveillance, governmentality and moving the goalposts: The influence of Ofsted on the work of schools in a post-panoptic era. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 66(2), 145-163. https://doi.org/10.1080/00071005.2017.1372560

Pillow, W. (2003). Confession, catharsis, or cure? Rethinking the uses of reflexivity as methodological power in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 16(2), 175-196. https://doi.org/10.1080/0951839032000060635

Poole, S. E. (2019). *Living and learning through song* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Chester, United Kingdom.

Poulson, L. (1998) Accountability, teacher professionalism and education reform in England. *Teacher Development*, 2(3), 419-432. https://doi.org/10.1080/13664539800200062

Prendergast, M. (2009). The phenomena of poetry in research: "poem is what?" In Prendergast, M. Leggo, C., & Sameshima, P. (Eds.). *Poetic Inquiry Vibrant Voices in the Social Sciences*. (pp. xix - xlii). Rotterdam, Netherlands: Sense Publishers.

Robinson, K. (2009). *The element: how finding your passion changes everything*. London, United Kingdom: Penguin Books.

Robinson, K. (2017). Foreword. In Resnick, M. *Lifelong Kindergarten: cultivating creativity through projects, passion, peers, and play.* Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Room 13. (2020). *Room 13: about.* Retrieved from: http://room13international.org/about/

Sahlberg, P. (2012). How GERM is infecting schools around the world? Retrieved from https:// pasisahlberg.com/text-test/

Shakespeare, W. (2006). *As you like it*. In Dusinberre, J. (Ed.). London, United Kingdom: Arden Shakespeare.

Shamir, R. (2008). The age of responsibilitization: on market-embedded morality'. *Economy and Society*, 37(1), 1-19. https://doi.org/10.1080/03085140701760833

Sibieta, L. (2019). Comparing GCSE performance in England Wales – equivalent or not? *Education policy institute.* Retrieved from https://epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/comparing-gcse-performance-in-england-and-wales/

Smith, J. K. (1993). *After the demise of empiricism*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Smith, L. (2015). *Understanding and using Progress 8 and other features of the new GCSE English examinations*. Retrieved from https://www.letsthinkinenglish.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Understanding-and-using-Progress-8-etc-full-version.pdf

Solé, L., Sole-Coromina, L., & Poole, S. (2020). Mind the gap: Identifying barriers to students engaging in creative practices in Higher Education. *Journal of Work Applied Management,* 12(2), 207-220. https://doi.org/10.1108/JWAM-03-2020-0017

Torrance, H. (2018). The Return to Final Paper Examining in English National Curriculum Assessment and School Examinations: Issues of Validity, Accountability and Politics. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 66(1), 3-27. https://doi.org/10.1080/00071005.2017.1322683

Tuan, Y. (2011). *Space and place: the perspective of experience.* (7th ed.). Ann Arbor, MI: University of Minnesota Press

Watson, C. (2019). From accountability to digital data: The rise and rise of educational governance. *Review of Education,* 7(2), 390–427. https://doi.org/10.1002/rev3.3125

Wesling, D. (1996). *The scissors of meter: grammetrics and reading*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

White, J. (2010). Speaking 'over' performativity. *Journal of Educational Administration and History,* 42(3), 275-294. https://doi.org/10.1080/00220620.2010.492960

Wiggins, J. (2011). Feeling it is how I understand it: found poetry as analysis. *International Journal of Education & the Arts,* 12(LAI 3). Retrieved from http://www.ijea.org/v12lai3/.

Willet, J. (1977). *The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht* (3rd ed.). York, United Kingdom: Methuen.

Winnicott, D. W. (2010). *Playing and reality.* Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge.

Wright-Mills, C. (1977). *The sociological imagination.* (5th ed.) London, United Kingdom: Pelican Books.

Yeats, W. (1967). Sailing to Byzantium. In Jeffares, A. (Ed.). *W B Yeats selected poetry.* (6th ed.) (pp. 104-105). London, United Kingdom: Macmillan.

Zimmermann, J. (2015). *Hermeneutics.* Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.

Zwirn, S. G. (2006). Artist or art teacher: the role of gender in identity formation and career choice. *Teaching Artist Journal*, 4(3), 167-175. https://doi.org/10.1207/s1541180xtaj0403_4

Appendices

Appendix A: Participant Information Sheet

Study Title
An exploration of how English teachers engage with creative practices

I, Martin Matthews, would like to invite you to take part in a research study. Before you decide if you wish to take part it is important you understand why the research is being undertaken and what it involves. Please take time to read the following information. Please ask questions if anything is not clear or you feel you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

What is the purpose of the study?
The purpose of this study is to explore how you, as a teacher consider creativity in relation to both your professional practice and in life as a whole.

Why have I been invited?
You are secondary school English teacher and are in a good position to offer your reflections on your view of creativity as an English teacher.

Do I have to take part?
Not at all. It's entirely up to you. I will ask you to give written consent to take part; I will also ask you to give verbal consent to being interviewed if you wish to go ahead. You are free to withdraw at any time from this process.

What will happen to me if I take part?

- You will undertake two interviews, of no more than thirty minutes each.
- The interviews will take place over a two terms.
- You will sit down with the interviewer (Martin Matthews) and be asked questions on your experiences of creativity in English. These interviews could be completed in small groups.
- The interviews will be recorded. Your name will not be used. Recordings will be destroyed at the end of the research process.
- Some of the things you say may be used in the write up of this exploration. If this is the case, your responses will be anonymous and you will be given a pseudonym.

What will I have to do?

- Attend two interviews and answer questions freely.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

- We will be discussing your experiences of creativity as a teacher and in general life. This could involve you talking about potentially personal issues.
- There are no physical risks.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

- There are no clear benefits as such, although it is hoped that by discussing your experiences of creativity in English it might allow you to consider your own professional practice more deeply.

What if there is a problem?
If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should speak to the researcher (Martin Matthews) who will do their best to answer your questions. Contact number:

Alternatively, you can address any concerns to David Cumberland, the Dean of Education and Children's Services Faculty at Chester University - d.cumberland@chester.ac.uk

Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?
All information which is collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential.

- The interviews will be recorded. At no point will your name be used in the recording.
- The recordings will be stored safely in a locked filing cabinet.
- You will be given a pseudonym when the interview is written up.
- Electronic data will be stored on a hard drive with a password known only to the researcher.
- The data will be used solely for this piece of research.

What will happen to the results of the research study?
The findings from the study will be written up into a doctorate thesis. You will have access to the final thesis.

Appendix B: Research Consent Form

If you are happy to participate in the research outlined in the participant information sheet, please complete and sign the consent form below

	Activities	Initials
1	I confirm that I have read the attached participant information sheet, have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions and had these answered satisfactorily.	
2	I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without detriment to myself. I understand that it will not be possible to remove my data from the project once it has been anonymised and forms part of the data set. I agree to take part on this basis	
3	I agree to the interviews being audio / video recorded.	
4	I agree that any data collected may be published in anonymous form in academic books, reports or journals	
5	I agree that the researcher may retain my contact details in order to provide me with a summary of the findings for this study.	
9	I agree to take part in this study	

Data Protection

The personal information we collect and use to conduct this research will be processed in accordance with data protection law.

_____ _____ _____

Name of Participant Signature Date

_____ _____ _____

Name of the person taking consent Signature Date

Appendix C
Additional poems: Laura (2019)

I have much less desire to write now.
s
u
p
I still have a massive passion for reading
o
s
I love
d
o
n
‘
the love I’ve got for theatre
r
see myself as a writer.
a
l
l
y

Self-deprecate

I think many of us self-deprecate
I think on the whole I’m quite
a confident person,
but I think in terms of -

if I’m being totally honest here –
I was a bit nervous about you
wanting to talk to me about my
creativity because I’m –

I’m not a very creative person –

I was like why does he want to
talk to me about creativity?

I don’t have time to be creative.

Laughs.

That production

I love it –
when I was in that production

that was a massive thing for me –

I was taking myself right out
of my comfort zone.
It was something I was approached to do,

I didn't volunteer for it and I was like
"do you know what?
Yeah, sod it I'm going to go for it" –

but when you're talking to other
people about it you don't

pause

want to sound like you're
being a tosser.

Laughs.

I kept a diary

Did I tell you that I had kept a diary?
It only occurred to me afterwards –
I kept proper - not writing every day,
but at least once a week

if not a couple of times a week.
I kept diaries until probably about 15/16.
Looking back, this is quite embarrassing,
but it's all – it is kind of relevant –

they weren't just factual diaries,
because they were often about little embellishments –
but you know when you look back and
you're like "and I said to him",

laughs,

you know, almost a little bit like of
what you wish you'd said –
borderline what was true and what was –
what was what I wish I'd said or done.

Opportunity

If I was to pick one thing

I'd want to do the 'little' am-dram again.
I really enjoyed that.
I was at the point where
I nearly agreed to do something
this summer and then

I just thought this is nuts,
I've got too much on.

Sighs.

Stress.

Basically the performance is going to be in June.

I just felt like I could not truly promise that
-and you feel like you spread yourself thin –

but that already is a bit of a niggle –
you know when you think

"I've just passed up what really
could have been quite an exciting opportunity".

In the dark with my glow sticks (Further reaction to the found poem 'Adrenaline rush')

That group thing – definitely that group thing –
I'm not suited to working on my own;
I know I'm not.

Even on a totally different level,
forcing myself to do sports–
I would never be someone who would

go for a run.
I have to go to a class and
I have to be with other people.

And I have to do my clubercise
in the dark with my glow sticks
and I have to be reliant on

someone picking me up,
or I'm picking them up and
I'm going to let them down if I don't go –

and I get there and I love it.

It's always the thought –

I think for me it would be the fear of a blank page –
"what am I going to write?"

Laughs.

For me my creativity is best
when I'm with a team of people,

whether it be students,
whether it be other people I'm performing with,
other people - even just in like a keep fit context.

I think for me it's that interaction with others;
I would find it hard to sit down and write alone.

Chains

Are they the chains in my mind?

Laughs

Think about that Rousseau quote.

I think they're probably quite self-imposed.
I think that right now at this period in my life
I feel like I'm juggling a lot and not doing it very well –
I say I'm a confident person, but on the other hand

I have a lot of doubts…

Sighs

The constraint I always say is time and
the constraint I also say is stress –
if I was being truly reflective, could I manage
my own stress better and
am I creating some of my own stress?

If I were more creative would that
alleviate some of my stress?

Laughs

I feel like I'm at that stage with middle age at the moment,

like I’m not middle aged, but I’m nearly,

laughs

and everything’s just pressing a little bit –

Grey gap year

Did I talk to you about my plans for my grey gap year?
I’m gonna go and teach – the idea is
I’m gonna go and teach in the south of France where
data doesn’t exist – in my mind, in my fantasy –

I’m gonna be on a little farm in Provence,
teaching some lovely farm children –
computers don’t exist, data doesn’t exist.
I’m gonna have long lunch breaks in the sun with

red wine. I will definitely paint while I’m there –
might read some French literature.

I seem to be putting off my creativity.
I was saying that I want to pick up doing some acting,
or my French again –

I’m going to have my grey gap year
–I’ll be fifty –
gonna go and have a grey gap year,
gonna go and work abroad and,

whimsically,

find myself.

And do all these wonderful things.
- the constraints –
a lot of them are down to feeling nervous
about not being good enough at the things
I’m already doing and

thinking if I take on something else…

they often say you could make the time.

Appendix D
Additional poems: Rachel (2019)

Twenty-five

You're not going to teach
twenty-five creative
lessons a week. You're going to teach
twenty-five, hopefully thoughtful

lessons a week - but you're
not going to have the time,
or the energy, or the means
really to think of

twenty-five lessons
that are all, what I would
describe as creative. Partly
because the subject

limits you and the curriculum
limits you as well.

The more you think

I think historically I would
have thought of myself as
a creative person –
lots of things get in

the way though.

Obviously.

I feel creative when
I have an idea and I follow
that idea. I think that's when
I would feel creative.

I don't write.

I just don't feel like
I could write anything
that I would be
happy with.

So I don't write
anything.

I haven't written since
I was at university.
Just because I find
that it is restrictive that

you might not write
something good.
I always used to have
the idea, when

I was younger, that
I would write something;
a novel specifically. As
I've got older

I don't know if my creativity
is more restricted – the
more you think about
it the less you can do.

Connection

Reasons for wanting to be an
English teacher – partly
because I was bored and
I wasn't using my brain.

I was always quite envious
of a few friends from
university that still had
a very close connection

with literature through
teaching. I felt like I had
lost some of that
connection over the years.

I'd lost the connection to
the thing I really loved.

That connection

I've now got a connection that is
very much limited to - I don't know
whether the curriculum would actually
allow me to expand that connection that much.

This feeling of being –

I suppose of having –
I suppose –

pause

just having

pause.

I said it because

I think they very much do sound like what I've said.
the transcript is more depressing than the poems –
but because it's listening to the
stream of words that comes out of your mouth
that doesn't make sense

- sometimes you pause and change direction –

actually in real life, in transcript form it is
– it's quite unpleasant

– to translate that into poetry –
is a weird form to have it in.

But, then, I kind of like it as well.

It feels like an accurate reflection of what I've said.

Appendix E
Additional poems: Daniel (2019)

Paint on paper.

I've got a six-year old niece
and when she was younger
she would smear a load
of paint on paper,

bring it home and it would
get stuck on the fridge.
"That's so creative;
that's so wonderful".

It quite clearly isn't,
but in that context it is.

She produced a painting that's
hanging in my mum and dad's house –
I genuinely thought they'd
bought it from somewhere –

it was produced by a five
year old – and it was
really, really good.
I don't believe - and

I might be doing her a disservice-
that she's going to go off
to be a great artist –
I think she may have

stumbled across something
that's created almost by
accident. I think some
creativity can be accidental.

That's really creative

The word creative -
we have to look at
the etymology of it.

I think originally,
the only use of that
word was with

God.

The only creator was
God.

God created the
world and that
was it.

To call someone else
creative would be
to compare them to

god-like.

Over time the word
has softened – suddenly
it was applicable to

artists and
sculptors and
musicians.

Then it softened
even further to the
next tier and now

a kid that's just
smeared some paint
on some paper.

"Oh that's really creative".

Scaffolded

Where I either model creativity
or try to get creativity from
students - is in quite a
structured way. For example

interesting headlines for an article.
At the most basic level I would
expect some device in the headline –
they go into the exam, they'll get

a little tick – well done you've
used a device. I need every
student in the room to be able
to come up with a creative headline –

so I set parameters for creativity –

it’s heavily scaffolded.
I put the platform in place,
but within quite strict parameters.

I’m there as a gatekeeper
of what is classed as creative
and what isn’t.

Only chance

There’s so much pressure on
them, that if they fail once –
they go for something that’s
compelling, but they miss the mark –

that was it, that was your only chance.

Going back to musicians, like
The Beatles – what if it’s like “right lads,
you’ve got one gig in The Cavern Club
and that’s going to decide whether

you can continue or not”.
And that night it all goes wrong –
then that’s it, sorry it’s over.
They played lots of gigs and they

got better and better and they
were allowed to have bad nights,
they were allowed to fail.
I just fear that we

sighs

we try to encourage creative
writing, but they actually don’t
have many opportunities to fail.

Previously I wrote

Previously I wrote –
non-fiction type stuff;
things that went into the
student newspaper.

I used to write trip
reports; always with a
humorous and light

hearted tone. But I just

did that because I enjoyed it.
One of the lads was a
photographer; but for me it
was words that meant more.

I dread to think - they're probably
still out there somewhere.

Applying the mark scheme

I write for me,
I don't write for
other people –

but if you said to
me "okay, you're
writing to win a

competition" -
a bit like the
students applying the

mark scheme to their
writing. I would
write differently.

Appendix F Additional poems: Dawn (2019)

To be creative

To be creative –
I think it's about having
an opportunity to express
ideas and views.

And feelings.

And to do that in
different mediums.

Whether you do that
through writing,
through painting,
through cookery.

You can also be
creative with figures.

It should be expression
of some kind –
of feeling,
or emotion.

X, Y and Z

I do genuinely worry
about students.
I worry that they
are not confident

and creative, that
we don't nurture that
side of them. I worry,
even with reading,

that has to fit in
boxes. Students as
a consequence of that
only want to do what

they feel they need
to do for the exam –
we don't nurture an
intellectual appetite;

we just nurture this
idea that they've got
to pass the exams
and they need to do

X, Y and Z.

The way things were going

I talk with my dad quite a lot,
'cause he was a primary headteacher
and he felt, even when he retired -
which was probably some twenty years ago -

that things were changing for the worse
and children's creativity was being stifled.
He retired when the literacy hour came in
for primary schools.

He's a very creative man my dad.
I know he wrote his own musicals
that children performed –
he always put a lot of thought and

effort into assemblies –
he would never just get something
off the peg,
it was always very much his own.

you know – he was despairing

laughs

at the way things were going when
he left primary schools all those years ago.

So it's nothing new really -
these are things we talk about.

My dad felt

My dad felt very much that
children's creativity was being

stifled,

that there was decreasing room
for them to express themselves.

to be creative;
to find mediums through which to do that.

And the literacy hour epitomised that
change ‘cause it was all about lessons in

specific

chunks

and teaching all this horrible
grammatical terminology –
‘cause obviously it’s vitally important that
children knew the names of everything.

I think that epitomised the changes that
had actually begun to occur and
they were all
a very bad thing, because

he was all about being

creative.

Legitimacy to ourselves

I think it’s important that we all have a
means of expressing what we think and
what we feel and that, and that,
in expressing them we often give them

a legitimacy to ourselves, but often
– and this sounds really contrived –
you work though things if you talk
about them don’t you? If you express them.

So something that is on your mind,
if you say it out loud it becomes a different thing.
I imagine if you painted it,
it would become a different thing.

You know - in expressing it you sort of
transform, translate –

something happens doesn’t it in that process.
it’s important to have that outlet for
emotions or feelings,
but that is part of creativity isn’t it?

I think that what's happening in schools
is that we're reducing children to exam commodities
That's not quite the right word – but we are reducing
them rather than helping them grow

Treasure

Keats' poem 'Lamia' –
one of my year 11 boys looked at it
and was asking me about it
and seemed to be a bit familiar with the poem.

He was interested in the allegorical readings
and what was going on
and that for me was like
"wow, there's a student here who's

thinking about things beyond what we're doing
and is genuinely interested".
Moments like that are very, very rare,
but those are the ones that I treasure.

it's nice to have students that are
interested and who think outside
of what they have to do to

pass an assessment.

It isn't all negative

It isn't all negative –
I have had some very happy times in the classroom –

not being on senior management –
not standing in front of, you know –

I did a couple of good assemblies that I still remember –
but it's those things that stay with you –

it's certainly not SLT meetings.

Laughs.